

SINCERITY

O R

The Upright Mans Walk to Heaven.

In Two PARTS, shewing,

- I. *That Sincerity is the true way to Happiness.*
- II. *That the keeping our selves from our own Iniquity, is the true way to sincerity.*

Delivered in several Sermons in the Parish-
Church of St. Michael in Long-stratton
Norfolk, by James Oldfield, late Minister
there. He being dead yet speaketh. 11.
Heb. 4.

Psal. 119. 80. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.*

The Carnal Mans Motto.

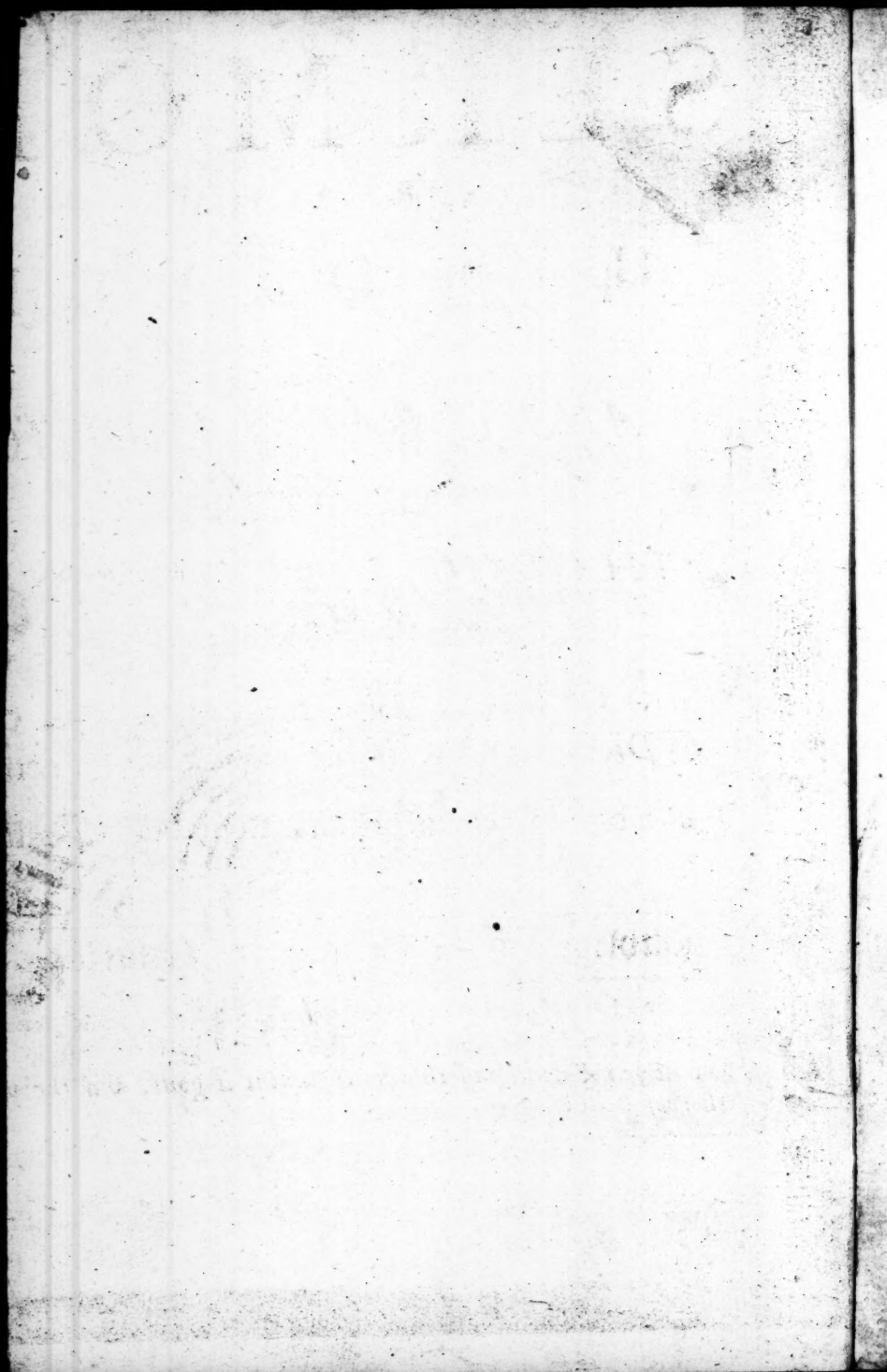
Ede, Bibe, Lude ; post mortem nulla voluptas.

The Spiritual Mans Motto.

Crede, Vive, Stude ; post mortem sola voluptas.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Edward Giles Bookseller in Nor-
wich, near the Market-place. 1687.



THE
AUTHORS
Preface
TO THE
READER.

I Have chosen no Patron for this little Book, because every one is a Patron of this sin. Courteous Reader, thou shalt find nothing here but what is thine own, i.e. thine own Iniquity, God who is thy Judge will lay no claim to it, for 'tis none of his Creatures, he never made it, neither is it to be
* 2 found

To the Reader.

found in the whole Inventory of the Creation; the Devil thy Accuser will lay it at thy door, as thy proper own, for though he have acted the part of a Midwife to help thee to bring it forth into the world alive, yet will he accuse thee for it, as the spawn that was first engendered in thy wicked and corrupt nature, after thy fall and defection from thy God; and thine own Conscience thy witness will also testify that it is thine own. I know it is an hard matter in this old and hold fast age of the world, to perswade any man to part with what is his own; Men being generally ^{now} as covetous of sin as they are of riches, desiring rather to partake of other mens sins, than to part with their own. And as it is a difficult task that I have undertaken, so also a task that will bring much hatred upon me, for none love that others should tell them of the faults of their own Children; so must I expect to be censured by others for censuring other mens sins; and perhaps proceeded against as an Eves dropper, for standing so near to every mans heart, and listning what is said or done in the private Closet of every mans Conscience. But Reader I would have thee know, that I come not to Father
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To the Reader.

any Child upon thee, but what I will prove, even from the Testimony of Scripture to be thine own; if thou be ashamed of it, why dost thou still keep it; if thou be not ashamed of it, be not angry with me for discovering it. Again, though I tell the whole world of it, it is only to affright thee out of it. The discovery of a mans secret sin, is half way towards the recovery of his perishing Soul: Seeing therefore what I do is only for thy good, be perswaded to take it in good part. Besides, whatever thou findest to be thy own in my Book, I give thee free leave to challenge it. He that concealeth another man's goods from him is a Thief; but he that revealeth another man's sin to him is his best friend. If thou be one that will but spare the time and take the pains to study thine own heart, thou wilt find all that is in this Book, and much more written there in a larger Volume, and thine own Conscience like Joleph (if thou wilt but hearken to it) will tell thee far worse tales of this thine Iniquity, than I am able to report unto thee. It is the Lords Candle wherewith I have searched thy dark heart, else I could never have made this discovery, and though per-
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haps I have told thee here more than ever thou knewest before, yet have I told thee no more than thou thy self by searching thine own heart shalt find to be true, may thou thy self after such a diligent search, shalt be able with the Queen of Sheba to tell me that I have not told thee ~~one~~ half of thine own Iniquity, the wickedness of it so far exceeds the fame and report that goes abroad in the world of it. Thus much good Reader, I thought to let thee understand concerning my discovery of this thine own Iniquity, I will only add a word of counsel to advise thee what thou shalt do towards thy Recovery, and so I will leave thee to God the searcher of all hearts.

1. Own this thy own Iniquity. In the Court of Heaven confession always goes before pardon, 32. Psal. 5.

2. Disown it, after thou hast confessed it, and humbled thy self for it, then with Abraham turn this Ishmael (though thine own) out of doors, and let it not grieve thee to part with it, 11. Job. 14, 15. 28. Prov. 13. The only way to keep thy self from sorrow in the other world is to keep thy self from sin in this world. These two receipts (which

To the Reader.

(which I have taken out of Gods own dispensatory) I present to thee, which that thou mayest put in practice for thy Eternal good, is the Prayer of,

Thy Servant in the

Work of the Lord.

J. O.

TO

To the Reader

which I have taken out of Coll. and
I believe, I have not lost, which I
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THE
Publishers Preface
TO THE
READER.

Courteous READER,

T*How hast here presented to thy view,
certain Sermons of that Reverend
Divine now with God, Mr. James
Oldfield, whose very Name will make way
for their welcome, to as many as well knew
him; for such could not but know, that he
was a painful, diligent, and faithful Mini-
ster of Christ; Acts 18. 24. a mighty Apol-
os in the sacred Scriptures, that according
to his great Knowledge therein, Acts 20. 27.
did not shun to declare the whole Counsel of
God to his People, 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. being a
faithful steward of those Mysteries of God,
A 2 that*

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that are contained therein, 2 Tim. 2. 15. *at*
workman that needed not to be ashamed, becau
cause he divided the word of truth aright, and
gave to every one that portion that did
right belong unto him; he could not so Ezek
13. 10, 11. daub with untempered mortar
as to say peace, peace to such Souls who ha
nothing to do with peace, Is. 3. 10, 11. th
he would tell the righteous it should go wel
with them, yet he was not afraid to tell th
wicked it should go ill with them, and tha
they Acts 8. 23. were in the gall of bitter
ness, and in the bond of iniquity; as he wa
to the former, Acts 4. 36. a Barnabas, *the*
Son of Consolation; so he was to the latter
Mark 10. a Boanerges, a Son of Thunder
who Is. 58. 1. cried aloud, and spared not
lifted up his Voice like a Trumpet, and shew
ed the wicked their transgression and sins
Ezek. 3. 17, 18, 19. and like a faithful
Watchman warned them from their wicked
ways, Jer. 3. 15. A Pastor he was according
to Gods own heart, which fed his Flock with
knowledge and understanding, and 1 Pet. 5.
3. was an example thereunto, for he did
ὁ δὲ δοτὴρ καὶ οὐκ ὁ δεικνὺς not only Preach well, but
also Live well; verba vertebat in opera, he
turned his Words into Works, what he Preach-
ed

To the Reader.

5. d to others, he practised himself, he did not
be enelopes telam texere do and undo, build
an with one hand and pull down with the other,
d out his life was sweetly consonant to the tenor
ek of his teaching, in a word, he was one, to
ter whom, if ever to any, God had given the Art
half winning Souls, the first Text that ever he
th reached to that Flock, over the which the
vel Holy Ghost had made him so long an Overseer,
th was that in the 11. Prov. 30. he that win-
hat eth Souls is wise, and this was his design all
cer long his Ministry, for this he Preached, for for this he lived
ma his he. Prayed; for this he Studied, yea with
Desires that many Souls might be brought in
cer Christ, he dyed. what entertainment the
er following Sermons of this Blessed Saint will
not meet wishal in the world, I can easily foresee,
em o such poor Souls, as are burthened with sin,
is and would fain be rid of it, they cannot I
ful hink be unacceptable; If others censure
ked them, 'tis no more than what I looked for in
ing the publication of them; it will be no wonder
ith if those condemn them, that are guilty of the
5. ns they condemn, it would be a greater won-
did der if they did not; for Men love not to hear
out their sins spoken against; such Treatises as
ho his, the purport of which is, to persuade
h- ten to part with what they so dearly love;
ed

To the Reader.

viz. their beloved sin, their own iniquity, and to shew them the inevitable, unavoidable danger that their poor Souls are in of perishing eternally, if they do not, must needs be ungrateful and unpleasant to such, as have taken up a resolution not to depart from Iniquity. If any curious Reader, shall find any Errata's either in word or phrase, or any thing that seems imperfect, I desire him not to impute it to the Reverend and Learned Author, but to the Transcriber or Printer, that so he may not be condemned for our faults; I must indeed confess, I took what care and pains I could, in the transcribing of them from the Authors own Notes, that there might be no mistakes, yet his Notes being written no otherways, than for his own use in the Pulpit, I may have made some, especially in the beginning, where some things (I suppose they occurred) were in his Notes set before which should have followed after, and I had no way to reduce them to their proper place but as the sense led me, the pages not being figured, therefore if there be not in the explication of the Text, that coherence and dependence of one thing upon another ~~as~~ they ought to be, or that you might expect from so able a Divine, you see the reason; wit

To the Reader.

out doubt, if he had lived to have transcribed them himself, they had come out in a better Method than now they do and more polite. One thing more I think fit to acquaint the Reader with, namely, that these Sermons were the Fruit of his younger years in the Ministry, he being not long called to that great work before the time of the last great Plague, which occasioned his Preaching of them upon certain Fast days, set apart to seek the Lord upon that account, without doubt he much improved himself by Preaching, and therefore the Sermons of his latter years, would better discover to the world the singular gift of Preaching, that God had blest him with above others; yet I chose rather to publish these, and that upon a double account, first because he designed these for the Press, as appears by the Preface and the Contents, which he drew up with his own hand, and the Title page, which he had writ over very fair, tho he had not proceeded so far as to transcribe the Sermons. 2. Because Treatises on such a Subject as this can never be more seasonable than in these days, wherein iniquity so abound, I pray, ~~God~~ it may be for the suppressing thereof, if thou would'st profit by these Sermons, then 1. read them with attention,

To the Reader.

2. take thy Bible, ^{and} ~~or~~ (as thou readeſt) turn to thoſe Proofs which for brevity ſake are only noted, the words not recited, and 3. be ſure thou forget not to beg of God (both before and after thy reading) to ſet home the truths thou readeſt upon thy heart. I aſſure the Reader, I have no other end in publiſhing theſe Sermons, than what I dare ſay was the Authors in Preaching them, viz. Gods glory and the good of Souls, which that they may be ſerviceable to this end, ſhall be my daily Prayers to him, who while Paul plants, and Apollos waters alone give the increaſe,

Vale.

THE

THE CONTENTS

Obs. in two parts.

1. Doctrinal
where
three
things.

1. what
is our
own
sin.

1. In respect of constitution.
2. In resp. of habitation.
3. In resp. of provision.
4. In resp. of protection.
5. In resp. of love.
6. In resp. of delight.
7. In resp. of trade and calling.
8. In resp. of unwillingness to part with it.

1. Labour
to see
the e-
vil of
it.

1. This
is very
hard.

1. bec. we love it.
2. be. we love the evils in it.
3. b. unwilling to hear an evil report of it.
4. be. angry with those that repr. it.

2. This must be done in the

2 what
we
must
do to
keep
our
selves
from
this
sin.

2. Give it no entertainment. (1st. pla.
3. Choose another love.
4. Dispute not the case with flesh &c
5. Deny our selves. (blood.
6. Search in the Scripture what we shall gain by parting with it.
7. Be much in Gospel duties.
8. Labor as much as we can to thwart it.
9. Beg of God to do it for us.

3. Why

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3. Why
we
should
do this.

1. Because we love it.
2. Because of its great power over us.
3. This is the way to keep out other sins.
4. This stands most in competition with Christ for the heart.
5. Because it continually besets us.
6. This sin will damn us as well as 10000 afflictions.
7. This will be our great comfort in all afflictions.
8. This is the surest sign of our sincerity.

1a. In-
for-
ma-
tion
in 6
things.

1. Discovers the reason why so many go to Hell; because their beloved sins carry them thither.
2. Discovers the reason why so few are converted to the Gospel; because it bids them part with their own sins.
3. Discovers the folly of sinners who for a beloved sin will venture on damnation.
4. Discovers the reason why People are so in love with sin; because their own.
5. Discovers the chief work and duty of Ministers, to persuade People against their own sins.
6. Discovers the righteousness of Gods judgments against us, bec. we own sin.

2a. Re-
proof
to 4
forts.

1. Those who instead of keeping themselves from their iniquities, keep close and hide their iniquities.
2. Those who instead of keeping themselves from their iniquities, boast of them and glory in them.
3. Those who instead of forsaking their own sins, partake of others sins.
4. Those who instead of keeping themselves from their own sins, draw others into them.

Appli-

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Ap-
plication
4 fold.

1. The
grounds
of their
comfort
in 5
things.

3a. Con-
solation
in 2
parts.

2. Cha-
racters
of such
persons
in 8
things.

1. There is nothing to hinder their Union and Marriage with Christ.
2. No sin shall be laid to their charge.
3. All things shall work together for their good.
4. They have this privilege to have their Prayers heard and answered.
5. These persons are only fit to dye.

1. He is one that hath felt the smart and burden of sin.
2. He hath duly considered the danger of sin.
3. He will endeavour to keep others from their sins also.
4. He will be much in aggravating and speaking against his sin.
5. He will live ever after in a quite opposite course to that sin.
6. He will be less in censuring others for their sins.
7. He will part with every sin.
8. He will never return to that sin more.

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422. Exhortation it consist of these 3 branches.

1. The great Mystery of this iniquity laid down where 3 things.

1. The Mystery of it
2. fold.

1. working into the heart in 12. particulars.

1. It works altogether with our natures.
2. It comes with fair words at the first.
3. It bribes the senses to get into the heart.
4. It pretends a reformation.
5. It endeavours to work God out of the heart.
6. It outbids God in his promises.
7. It urges the common practice of most Men.
8. It hath a small beginning, blusheth at first at great sins.
9. It urgeth moderation in holiness.
10. 'Tis importunate will take no denial.
11. It gets in sometimes insensibly.
12. It tells us of Gods mercy and the power of Repentance.

Answ. to this last particular in 4 things.

1. 'Tis folly to sin that you may repent.
2. True Repen. no ease nor pleasant work.
3. 'Tis abominable to sin on this account.
4. God never promised Rep. to willful sinners.

2. work-

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1. It will endeavour to win upon the heart what it can.

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|---|--|--|---|
| <p>2. It will build strong Castles there & lay in ammunition.</p> | <p>1. The castles or forts 3</p> <p>2. Ammunition in 4 thin.</p> | <p>1. a blind mind this fort is raised 3 ways</p> <p>2. An hard heart.</p> <p>3. A seared Conscience.</p> <p>1. Carnal desires and affections.</p> <p>2. Wicked arguments to plead for sin.</p> <p>3. Prejudices against the People and ways of God.</p> <p>4. Curious and pleasant fancies of the pleasures and happiness in sin.</p> | <p>1. Sin keeps the soul ignorant of Christ and his ways.</p> <p>2. Keeps the soul ignorant of the nature and danger of sin.</p> <p>3. Keeps the soul ignorant of its estate and condition.</p> |
|---|--|--|---|
3. It bolts all doors, and stops all passages whence it may be thrust out.
4. It is always very pleasing and observant to the heart.
5. When 'tis in it keeps the heart abroad as much as it can.
6. It keeps as close as it can, that others may not take notice of it.
7. It perswades a Man of the necessity of keeping one sin or other about him.

2. Working in the heart in 2 particulars.

8. It

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|--|----------|--|
| <p>8. It objects the Saints examples that each of them had their sins, Answer in 5 things.</p> | <p>{</p> | <p>1. Though they did commit them yet they did not love them.
 2. A vain Argument for me to sin because of others sins.
 3. We should follow their Repentance not their sins.
 4. This spoils all our hopes for mercy at death.
 5. They got their pardon with great difficulty.</p> |
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9. It keeps the soul formal in duties.

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|--|----------|--|
| <p>10. It tells us all our happiness is gone if we part with it answ. in 3 th.</p> | <p>{</p> | <p>1. If you do not cast it out God will hate you.
 2. 'Tis to reject God to do as others do.
 3. You would not willingly partake with the wicked in their torments, why then in their sins.</p> |
|--|----------|--|

- | | | | | |
|--|----------|--|----------|--|
| <p>11. Sin will promise to be gone of its own accord here 3 considerations.</p> | <p>{</p> | <p>1. You may think your sin is gone when 'tis not, 3 instances.</p> | <p>{</p> | <p>1. Some think so because they have not been tempted to it as formerly.
 2. Others because they have not committed it a great while.
 3. Others because turned professors.</p> |
| <p>2. Some Mens sins do really leave them, yet they do not leave their sins.
 3. If you leave it to sin to be gon when it will you will never get rid of it.</p> | | | | |

2. The

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|---|---|---|
| <p>2. The deceitfulness of the heart in joyning with this sin in 8 particulars.</p> | <p>1. Our hearts perswade us that we have done enough already, this answer'd in 4 things.</p> | <p>1. One sin may damn the soul, as one wound kill the body.
 2. Christ dyed for every sin therefore we must kill every sin.
 3. If ever you out-live this sin, you must repent of it at last. repent.
 4. When ever you do this will be your burthen as long as you live. deceit</p> |
| | <p>2. They tell us they are against this sin and abhor it, yet endeavour not to rid it.
 3. They will set us to duties and yet keep this sin close.
 4. When the heart only loves the sin, but doth not commit the outward Act.
 5. When we do commit it, and yet pretend that our hearts dislike it.
 6. Our hearts will perswade us from the commission of sin to the continuance in it.
 7. Our hearts will plead Election, that the sins of the Elect shall not be laid to their charge.
 8. Our hearts will tell us that others think well enough of such and such sins.</p> | |

Here are 3 Corollaries.

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|---|--|
| { | <p>1. How little we are beholding to our own hearts.
 2. How little we ought to trust our own hearts.
 3. How needful 'tis to have our hearts renewed.</p> |
|---|--|

3. Our

The Contents.

3. Our great danger we are in from the two foregoing particulars, viz. the Mystery of sin and the deceits of our hearts in 8 particulars.

1. Here is odds, two against one. A subtle sin and a deceitfull heart.
2. We must subdue both together, else not out of danger.
3. These two Enemies will revive again after they are slain, there must be a continued War.
4. The danger the greater, because naturally we greatly love these two Enemies.
5. Our corrupt hearts will be always drawing us into occasions of this sin.
6. Our best weapon, viz. our hearts is in our Enemies hand.
7. While our hearts and sin are agreed we can never repent.
8. The danger great in respect of temptations, desertions and afflictions our hearts against us which should bear us up.

1. Scruples and objections of the godly against themselves, that this sin is not out when 'tis these are 6

1. Scruple, because they are sensible of their hypocrisie answered in 4 things.

1. We are all Hypocrites by nature, yet not all in a state of Hypocrisie.
2. 'Tis a good sign of sincerity for a Man to complain of his Hypocrisie.
3. The best rule to judge of our Hypocrisie is by our love to sin.
4. This is a Temptation of the Devil, who envies the joy and peace of a good Conscience.

2. Scruple,

The Contents.

1. Some propositions laid down.

2. Scruple, bec. they have fallen again & again into the same sin
answ. 2 ways.

2. Some Cautions added.

1. Even the saints themselves are subject to this falling sickness.

2. The Scripture doth nowhere tell us that such a sin again committed shall not be pardoned.

1. God will forgive us as much as he commands us to forgive others, we must till seventy seven times.

2. No sin but the sin against the Holy Ghost unpardonable, because we cannot repent of it.

3. A Man may commit the same sin again and again, and yet be in Christ and a state of grace as *David, Peter, &c.*

4. A Man may commit the same sin often, yet not be his own beloved sin.

1. Take heed of this falling sickness, relapse dangerous.

2. Presume not on the examples of the saints of falling again.

3. Take heed of relying too much on your own strength.

4. Make use of the means to keep from relapsing.

1. Keep a tender heart.

2. Repent to the purpose.

3. Our Saviours receipt, 26. *Mat.* 41.

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1. Several Cases concerning this Sin Answered these are of two sorts.

3. Scruple,
because
they find
not the in-
fluences of
the ordi-
nances.
Answer'd
2 ways.

1. By concession. This sin if it be still in us, and we do countenance it will hinder the power and vertues of the Ordinances.

2. By cau-
tion in 2
words.

1. Take heed that this be not false, that you say not you find no influence when you do, to state the Question aright consider 2 things.

1. What are the influences of the Ordinances they are 4.

1. Pricking, wounding.
2. Humbling.
3. Strengthening.
4. comforting

2. Examine your selves whether you have felt none of these, perhaps some though not all.

2. Take heed this be not true, 'tis a dangerous case, the means to get influences.

1. Go not to the Ordinances in your own strength.
2. Look beyond all duties and ordinances they are but means eye the end.
3. Be much in prayer to god for an influence on your Souls.

4. Scruple,

The Contents.

4. Scruple, because they see more sin in them now than before answered in 4 things.
- 1. Consider the work of conversion, 'tis to open the eyes to see sin which we saw not before.
 - 2. After conversion there is a contrary principle of grace, and sin, and that fights, and that makes us think sin stronger than before.
 - 3. The Devil will trouble us now more than before by laying sin to our charge.
 - 4. 'Tis a sign of a state of grace for any Man to be in this condition.

5. Scruple, because they think their Repentance not good enough answered in two ways.
- 1. 'Tis a good sign that person hath truly repented, who is troubled he hath repented no better.
 - 2. By direction to know true Repentance two ways.
 - 1. By its root. the deeper the surer 2 fold.
 - 1. In respect of what is past.
 - 2. Fearful & careful for the future.
 - 2. By its fruits 2 sorts.
 - 1. Turning from sin, loathing it as much as formerly loving it.
 - 2. Turning to God and godliness.

6. Scruple, because they are afraid to dye answered in 4 ways.
- 1. By confession in 2 particulars.
 - 1. That there is nothing in all the World so terrible as Death is.
 - 2. Sin as it is the only thing that brought in death, so it makes it terrible.
 - 2. By distinction, between a natural and a sinful fear of death.
 - 3. By consolation, a true saint if he fear death 'tis without a cause.
 - 4. By exhortation to seek after assurance that will expel all fears of death.

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2. Pleas of the wicked for themselves, that this sin is out when 'tis not these are 7.

1. Plea bec.
no body can
charge them
with sin anf.
3. ways.

- 1. 'Tis the policy of this sin to lye so close that others cannot perceive it.
- 2. Perhaps others may see it and yet not tell thee of it.
- 3. If God condemn thee what advantage is it, that the whole World acquit thee.

2. Plea bec.
Conscience
doth not
check them
answered in
4 things.

- 1. Though Conscience doth not accuse you it doth not follow that it cannot.
- 2. It doth not follow that therefore conscience will never accuse you.
- 3. You say conscience doth not accuse you, but doth conscience excuse you there's the Question.
- 4. Take heed of such bad quiet Consciences as never smite for sin.

3. Plea,
because
conscience
doth smite
them anf.
3. ways.

- 1. Trust not too much to troubles of Conscience.

2. Rules to
judge of
troubles
of con-
science.

1. when
a Man
is never
the bet-
ter for
them.

- 1. Look to the fountain of these troubles is it only for fear of punishment.
- 2. Examine what sins thou art troubled for? only open gross sins.
- 3. Whether doth this trouble drive thee.
- 4. Consider the effects, is it reformation?

2. When

The Contents.

1. When the soul is more troubled for the sin than for the punishment.
 2. When the soul takes more care to be washed from the filth than freed from the guilt.
 3. When the soul carefully avoids sin ever after.
-
1. That they may have whereof to boast.
 2. By outward duties to cloak their inward lusts.
 3. That they may have whereon to rest and trust to.
-
1. Even the very Hypocrites do the same.
 2. A Man may do all duties, and yet live under the power of sin.
 3. Duties performed where the life is not reformed do the more harden the heart in sin.
 4. Get the power of godliness into your hearts, and use these duties as helps to it.
 5. If many that do these duties shall go to Hell, what will become of those that do nothing.

The Contents.

5. Plea, be-
they have
left many
sins answ.
in 2 par-
ticulars.

1. 'Tis a
good be-
ginning
but 'tis not
enough.

1. There is no sinner in the world
but abstains from, yea, hates
some sins.
2. The Scripture character of a
Saint, is not the leaving of such
or such particular sins but sin
in the general.
3. Unless we repent and turn
from all sins, there's no mer-
cy.

Partial
2. A parti-
cular re-
formation
is not true
examin it
by 2 Quest.

1. Quest.
what are
the sins re-
formed.

1. Are they not on-
ly small petty sins?
or
2. Sins that cross
and hinder pre-
ferment, or
3. Gross iniquities
that all the Coun-
try cries shame
on, or
4. Such sins as have
first left you.

2. Question
what kind
of refor-
mation.

1. Only an outward
of life and not of
heart?
2. Only of passion
and not of Reason
and Judgment?
3. Only a leaving of
sin and not an ha-
ting?
4. Only a turning
from sin, and not a
turning to God.

6. Plea,

The Contents.

6. Plea, be. they can't endure sin in others answered 3 ways.
- 1. Censuring and judging others will not make a true Saint.
 - 2. 'Tis the sign of an Hypocrite to hate sin in others and not in himself.
 - 3. Follow the Gospel rules in this case.
 - 1. In judging and censuring our work lyes only at home.
 - 2. In reprovng and reforming we must first begin at home and then go abroad.

7. Plea be. they are not only professors their good works are to be seen answered 2 ways.
- 1. Even Hypocrites may imitate the Saints in these, therefore no trusting to them.
 - 2. Look to the Qualifications of them.
 - 1. They must proceed from a good heart.
 - 2. The tree must belong to Christ else hee'l not own the fruit.
 - 3. The fruit must
 - 1. Be done in faith.
 - 2. In Charity. } 1. to purposer bad fr.
 - 3. In Proportion. } 2. to the loyal we are pl. in.
 - 4. The aim and end of them must be good.

1. Motives
- 1. Because 'tis a beloved sin 3 branches.
 - 1. To love sin is to have communion with the Devil.
 - 2. If we love any sin we cannot love Christ.
 - 3. We cannot honour Christ better than by parting with a beloved sin.
 - 2. 'Tis the only sin that hinders our union with Christ.
 - Reason } these 3 judges
 - Scripture } give sentence
 - Conscience } against it.
 - 3. Consider how long God and Christ have waited on us for the mortifying of this sin.
 - 4. Consider the gracious offers the Lord makes to us if we will part with this sin.

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5. Consider the several aggravations of this sin, they are 10.

1. 'Tis a sin against light.
2. 'Tis a willful sin.
3. 'Tis a deliberate sin.
4. 'Tis an heart hardning sin.
5. 'Tis a judgment condemning sin.
6. 'Tis a sin of custom.
7. 'Tis a sin of great delight.
8. 'Tis a ruling sin.
9. 'Tis a sin maintained at an high rate.
10. Comes near the sin against the Holy Ghost.

3. Motives with Means and Directions.

6. Consider the dreadful effects of it.

1. It takes away all our spiritual strength.
2. It defiles all our holy duties.
3. It withers all our pleasures.
 1. Takes away the cause of all comfort.
 2. Its sweetness makes our comforts. —
 1. Empty.
 2. Dangerous.
 3. Very short.
 3. Damps us in the midst of our comforts.
 4. Makes all our comforts end in sorrow.
4. It robs us of all our spiritual beauty.
5. By degrees steals away our hearts from Christ.
6. At last 'twill fill the soul with horror.

7. Consider the blessings and benefits that accrue to us for casting this sin out.

1. Such have true cause of mirth.
2. The match concluded between Christ & the soul.
3. The Dev. can't hurt them.
4. They may trample on miseries and afflictions.
5. They are fit for death.

3. Con-

The Contents.

8. Consider the many loud calls to leave this fin.

1. The voice of Gods word.
2. The voice of Gods rod.
3. The voice of the blood of Christ.

9. Consider your profession of Christianity you make, and herein look.

1. Backward to your Baptism.
2. On your Prayers.
3. On your Promises.
4. On your coming to the Lords Table.

10. Consider what you loose by keeping this fin.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The things themselves great. 2. 'Tis an irreparable loss all the world cannot make thee amends for it. | } | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gods favor 2. Gods protection. 3. Assurance of Salvation. 4. Thy part in Chr. & place (in paradise. |
|--|---|---|

11. This is an unquestionable truth on all hands and all sides.

12. This is the power of godliness and power of Religion.

1. Act but according to your own judgment and reason in your sober mood.

2. Go to the Scriptures and get particular receipts against particular sins.

3. Have an eye to the promises of God in Scripture.

4. Labor to cast out this world out of your hearts.

5. Take not up a profession at large, be strict.

6. Avoid the company of the wicked that live under the power of fin.

7. Be much in soul sanctifying meditations.

3. Di-

2 Means

7

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3. Directions of 2 sorts.

1. In getting out this sin.

1. Be not over-hasty in this work.

2. Do not set a time to this work, begin presently.

3. Examine all you do here by Scripture.

4. Be sure you go not forth in your own strength.

1. Else 'tis a means to waste our time to tarry.

2. 'Tis a despising of God to leave his Work till last.

3. The sooner the easier.

4. The sooner the more pleasant.

5. If you stay too long it may prove too late.

2. After 'tis out.

1. Pray much against it.

2. Be watchful against it.

Psalm

Psalm 18. 23. *And I kept my self from
mine Iniquity.*

I Have often shewed you, since we have had both cause and opportunities to keep these days of Humiliation, both the excellency and vertue of Fasting and Prayer: I have likewise shewed you the Reasons, why God, after so many Fasts and Prayers, that have been put up to him in this Nation, is *The Intro-* not yet intreated for us, but *duction.* rather his anger is not turned away, and also his hand is stretched out still; the maine Reason is because we perform not this duty according to his appointment: I have likewise shewed you what such a Fast is as God respects, and as God hath appointed, you may hear it again, 58. *Isaiah 6.* The true Fast is to depart from sin and wickedness, for every one of us to amend our ways and lives: I have likewise pressed upon you Reformation as a necessary duty, that ought to accom-

accompany all our Humiliations, and without which all our Fasts are no better than sins, and our Prayers than profaneness, yea, let me add further, that 'tis a most horrible profaning of Gods Name to mix our Prayers and our Sins together, and may not God for this justly mix our blood with our sacrifices: Till we do that which God in his word calls upon us to do for him, we must never expect that God will do that which we in our Prayers call upon him to do for us. Read 26. *Leviticus* 23, 24. I come now as an addition to what I have formerly spoken, to shew you the way and means to a right Reformation, and that is, every one of us must follow *Dauids* example in the Text, to keep himself from his own Iniquity *i.e.* every one

These Serm. we shall, the sooner amend
were Preach. all. As now in London, that
presently as- ruinous place, upon which
ter the great God hath lately sent such a
fire in Lond. signal token of his wrath in
laying it in Ashes, before
they can begin to build again, the Foun-
dation must be cleared from all the heaps
of ashes and rubbish that lays upon it, and
the

the speediest way to do this, is for every man to clear his own ground; so is it in respect of us and the whole Nation, sin lies so close to every mans heart one sin or other, like so much rubbish upon the Foundation, that God cannot build us up again an holy Nation, a peculiar People to himself, and beautifie and adorn us again with his former mercies, now the speediest course that we can take herein, unless we are in love with our misery, is for every man to clear his own heart of his own particular sins. Thus *David* a man after God's own heart, hath set us himself as our Copy in the Text — *And I kept my self from mine iniquity.*

Methinks I see the multitudes in this Nation and *The great plague which* running from one place to another, shifting every *raged so fiercely in all parts* man for himself to escape *of this Nation.* the sickness that God sends among us, but where are the Persons that seek to avoid the sins that are committed among us: Alas poor creatures, we are afraid of Infected Houses, but we are not afraid of our own Infected Hearts, while we carry our sins about with

with us, we carry the Plague and the Wrath of God continually about us, hear what God saith to *Cain*, when he calls him to his Arraignment, 4. *Gen. 7*. Sin lies at our doors wherever we live, nay sin lies in our hearts wherever we are, and what favour then can we expect from God when we carry sin about with us. And therefore, once more let us look upon *David* in the Text, and see what he did—*And I kept my self*, &c. The Text is the lively picture of a sincere and upright heart, in it we have,

1. The Agent. *I*
2. The Act. *kept*
3. The Subject. *my self*
4. The Object. *Iniquity*.
5. The particularity of the Object, *mine Iniquity*.

Or we may divide it into 2 parts, and then we have,

1. The Act. *I kept my self*,
2. The Object, *from mine Iniquity*.

David in the first part of this verse, tells us that he was upright, and in the Text proves it to us. I was upright saith he before God, and that you may believe me, I'll tell you how, viz. in this thing, that

I kept my self from mine Iniquity. *Jamius* and *Tremellius* render the words thus, & *caveo mihi ne quid iniquè agam.* But our English Translation is exact according to the Original *וַיִּשְׁמַר מִיָּדוֹ* *And I kept &c.* both words have their Emphasis.

The first is *וַיִּשְׁמַר* it signifies to preserve, most properly to prevent or keep away that which is like to fall upon us, and that before it hath happened. It teacheth us the right way of keeping our selves from sin, viz. by preventing it before-hand, avoiding all occasions, *Prov. 22. 3.* A Noun coming from this Verb signifies a Watch-Tower, a place to descry a danger for preventing it. It signifies to observe and keep our ways by taking heed to them, so 'tis used *1 Kings 2. 4.* A Metaphor from a Watch-man in a City, or the Garrison in a Fortrefs. *Leighs Critica Sacra*, so should we keep a Garrison against sin, and be as Soldiers in a Watch-Tower, if we would keep our selves from it.

וַיִּשְׁמַר from mine Iniquity, *verbatim.* *Ps.* it signifies that which is unright, unequal, crooked and perverse, and so fitly by a Metaphor used to signifie Iniquity or Sin, for that is crookedness, *Psal. 125. 5. 18.*

Ezek.

Ezek. 25. Here you see the true nature of sin; 'tis a crooked, unequal, perverse thing. But further this word notes the vitiosity and crookedness of our nature, and so sets forth Original sin *Psal. 51. 5.* Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, *חַטָּאתִי בְּחַטָּאתִי בְּחַטָּאתִי* *ben-begnavon cholalti*, the same word in the Text, which is the Iniquity David calls his Iniquity, even that Iniquity wherein he was formed and born, this he kept himself from. Here's the root of all sin, look to the corruption of Nature, dry up the Fountain look especially to this sin. Thus you see the Emphasis of the Text, and *Junius* Translation may well serve for a good Comment upon it, he that keeps himself from this, keeps himself from all sin; all other endeavours against other sins, to wit actual are nothing unless you look to your Natures. To suffer this sin, namely, original corruption to escape and strive against other sins, is no better than for a Magistrate to give Licences to set up many Ale-houses, the causes of drunkenness, and then be strict to punish those that are drunk.

This is the continual running issue in the Soul, the sin that lies always in our bosoms

bosoms and is continually with us, this is the Iniquity of the Soul, against which we ought especially to watch and be upon our guard, as Sentinels in a Watch-tower, that are always looking when the Enemy comes, that they may not be unprepared for him, so let us preserve our selves from this sin, and strive to make right and straight these our crooked Natures, and then shall we be preserved from all danger of sin, and shew our uprightness and sincerity in the sight of God, and walk in the straight paths of his Commandments.

We ought to take care of other mens sins, but above all we ought to have a care of our own sins. I will explain the Text by a similitude, *Sampson* was very careful to avoid the *Philistines*, he always eyed and watched the *Philistins*, and they could do him no hurt; oh but *Sampson* had a *Philistin*, a *Dalilah* that lay in his bosome, *Sampson* was not careful of her, and she at last ruined him. The World is full of sins, as the Country where *Sampson* lived was full of *Philistins*, these sins beset us every day, and lye in wait to catch us, as the *Philistins* did *Sampson*, now some men are so wary, that they will avoid

void all companies and occasions, that may bring them into these sins, and seem to be like *Sampson* strong Christians. Oh but friends, every one of us hath a *Dalilah*, some sin or other of our own in our own bosoms, which we carry about continually with us, and unless we beware of this sin, though perhaps we may keep our selves free from all other sins, yet this at last will ruin us. Again, suppose a man in a Consumption, this man is very careful of all other sicknesses, will not enter into any house where the Small pox is, will not go near any that are Infected with the plague, keeps himself from all other Infectious Diseases, why, you will say this man is likely to live; Oh no, he carries his own disease about with him and within him, and the Consumption lies in his breast rotting his lungs, if he have no care of this, this is enough without any other disease speedily to make away with him. Thus is it the duty of every man, that regards the Health and Salvation of his Soul, not only to keep himself from sins without, but from the sin within him, not only from the sins of the times, but from his own sins. This is the

fin

fin the *Goliath*, unless this be slain, we shall never conquer the whole Army of these *Philistins*; conquer this sin, and you shall the more easily conquer all other sins, while you keep your selves from all other sins, you only shew your selves upright in the sight of men, but he that keeps himself from this sin, his own sin, shews that he is like *David*, sincere in the sight of God.

And thus you see as plainly as I can express my self; the force and meaning of these words,

I know now you expect that I should give you the Doctrine or Observation contained in them, and to give you it in as plain words as I can; 'tis this,

Doct. That every true and sincere heart-ed Christian, will above all other things endeavour to keep himself from his own sin, his own Iniquity.

'Tis a most plain truth, but if I may speak without comparison, the most profitable truth in all the Bible. Here you see the nearest cut to Heaven, the shortest path to Glory, the surest way to be secure from all other sins. If a man should keep a Thief in his house, and this man should

have his pockets pickt every night, and finding himself grieved at it should to prevent it, buy new locks and bars to his doors, and make all the Walls of his house strong, that no Thief might enter in; why (you would say) this man doth very simply, he may loose all his money though his house be never broken up, and further (you would say) it were his only way to examin the Thief that dwells with him, and put him out of doors: If any of you should have your own houses on fire, you would not be so foolish, as to carry buckets of water and fling them on your Neighbours houses, for fear they should be set on fire and neglect your own, why as *Nathan* said to *David* you are the men, People now adays, do wonderfully complain of other men and their sins, as if they should fear the worse for them, but look not into their own hearts, and see sin lying and gnawing there, every man should begin at home: If a man hath a Son at home, that is an idle and unhappy Boy, and should break all his Glass-windows, you would say, this were a strange course for this man to go to his Neighbors and complain to them of their idle Children,

dren, that do always sling stones, and never correct his Child at home, that did him all the mischief. Friends, I pray let me persuade you to look into your own hearts, and you shall see that you have some sin or other there, that doth you all the mischief, you will see then, that the only way for you to get peace and comfort is with *David*, to keep your selves from your own Iniquities. *David* had many Enemies abroad, as his Father-in-Law *Saul*, who fought his Life; his own Son *Absalom*, who fought his Kingdom, but none so great as his sin within him. *Saul* banisht him from his Court, *Absalom* banisht him from his Kingdom, but none brought him so much trouble as his sin within him. 51. *Psal.* 1, 2, 3. oh this was that which broke his bones, nothing grieved him and vexed him so much as this; and therefore 'tis worth the while to observe the Title of this *Psalme*, and when *David* penned it. To the chief Musician a *Psalme* of *David* the Servant of the Lord; who spake to the Lord the words of this Song, in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of *Saul*. *David*

could never say thus before, before he had cleansed himself from his Iniquity within him, he always found one Enemy or other, one trouble or other without him, but when once he had turned his sin out of doors, then came peace and comfort to dwell with him, sincerity is the highest pitch that a Christian is able to attain unto in this life, and this is the nearest way to sincerity, for a man to keep himself from his Iniquity. In the prosecution of this truth, I will lay you down and treat of these following particulars. I will shew you,

1. What that sin is which a man may call his own sin, or his own Iniquity.

2. What we must do when we have found out our own sin to keep our selves from it.

3. Why, we should above all things keep our selves from our own sin.

1. What is that sin, which a man may call his own sin?

Ans. I gave you a hint of it in the explication, that it is Original sin, the sin of our Natures.

1. The word it self signifies so much.

2. This sin is that which may be most pro-

properly called ours as first formed with us. 2. No Temptation or occasion to it as to other sins, and so none in the fault with us but our selves, as in other sins. This in the general.

2. But more particularly to describe that sin, which is as the *Reuben* the first born and strength of it.

1. In respect of constitution, that sin is a mans own sin, which is the sin of his Nature, with which he was born or bred, that sin to which a man is carryed out by his own Nature, though he had no temptation at all to it, as for example, the sin of swearing is so natural to some men, that they will swear though no man hurt them, anger them, or provoke them to it; they cannot speak without an Oath, some men are naturally angry and touchy, they will be angry without a cause, some men are naturally covetous, though they have no Children nor Heirs, nor any in the World that they care for, yet they love to be scraping up of money and hoarding it up, they love to be hard and gripple in their dealings, some mens very Natures carry them to the sin of lust and uncleanness, though they have Wives

which for Beauty are *Rachels*, for bearing Children are *Leah's*, yet they must hunt Bawdy-houses and follow strange Women, the Apostle *Jude* describes such Persons, *v.* the 10th. he compares such men to brut beasts, every beast hath his particular quality, so every man his particular sin, the Lion by nature is fierce, the Goat lustful, the Sow naturally loves to wallow in the mire, the Fox to steal; and so every one of us in this sence are like beasts till we be renewed, we have some sin or other, which even our very natures carry us out unto, though the Devil should never tempt us, we have all in us till grace come and sanctifie nature, some sparks of some sins in our own breasts that are of our own kindling. Now this is our own sin.

2. In respect of Habitation; that sin is a mans own sin which he suffers to dwell in him. A man may lodge a stranger for a night or two, but none but his own family will he suffer to dwell with him: A man may invite many Women to a dinner or a banquet, but he will suffer none but his own Wife to lye with him, *11. Luk. 7.* so that sin that lies down with thee

thee and riseth up with thee, that goes to Church with thee, that dines and sups with thee, that is with thee in thy trading and calling, that is most properly thy own sin. *Sauls* malice against *David* went with him wherever he went, 4. *Jer.* 14. they are thy vain thoughts if they lodge in thee, so that is thy sin, whatever it is, if thou give it house room and heart room,

3. In respect of provision ; that is a mans own sin that he makes provision for. A man will provide for his own Children, and provide the best for them ; so you may know which is a mans own sin , which he takes all the pains that he can for it, labours hard to provide for it, some men will labour hard and fare hard, that they may buy their Children fine cloaths and dress them up, and give them great portions ; though they see other Children naked and starved, they will not relieve them.

Now observe this, that sin which fares best, that is thy sin, 13. *Rom.* 14. what does the drunkard do, why all the money that he can earn, beg, or borrow it goes to the Ale-house, the Whore-master thinks nothing too much or too good to spend on

on his Whore; the proud man is all for his back, sell away whole Farms to buy fine cloaths, the glutton is all for his belly, the envious man is still endeavouring to satisfy his malice, and some men will spend all their Estates at Law, only to undo their Neighbours that they grudge, so every man hath his particular sin that he maintains at an high rate, and is continually providing for it, more than for his Soul, 4. *Jam.* 3. . .

4. In respect of protection; as a man will provide for his own, so will he protect his own. Now that sin is a mans own sin, which he will be still pleading for, and protecting and defending, will rage if any man speak against it. 6. *Judg.* 28³⁰ 31. begin. so will men be furious and outrageous in pleading for their own sins, as if they were their Gods, as if they could not live without them; tell a swearer of his swearing, you had as good thrust a pin into his eye; or a drunkard of his drunkenness, what faith he here is such ado, 'tis but good fellowship, *Jud.* 8. what was the reason that those (you read of there) spake evil of their Governours, why, because they punished them for their

their sins, curbed their sins, like galled Horses you may touch them in any place till you come to touch the sore, and then will they kick at you; so speak against any other sins besides a mans own sin, and he is not moved, but have a care of that least he fly in your face; *John* the Baptist could say any thing to *Herod*, and *Herod* was well pleased with him, but when he came to reprove his *Herodias*, then he must be presently sent to prison, his *mittimus* is quickly made, so every man hath his *Herodias* his particular sin, that he will maintain and defend as much as his life.

5. In respect of love, thy beloved sin is thine own sin, there is in every man a *dilectum delictum*, some sin that he is so dainty of, that no wind must blow upon it, 1 *Kin.* 3. 25, 26. Oh is it not so with us? is not their some sin or other in us that we do all that we can to keep it alive, and do not our bowels yearn towards it? is not their such a sin that we dare not displease for all the World, 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. *Balaam* chose rather to displease God, than to displease his lust; so many men love
some

some sins so well, that they will rather go to Hell with them then part.

6. In respect of delight ; *peccatum in deliciis*, that is, a man's own sin. It may be this sin in the Text, which *David* calls his own sin, was his delightful sin, viz. his revenging himself against *Saul*, revenge is the most pleasing and delightful sin to corrupt nature, 2 *Thes.* 2. 12. You may easily know the sin that a man takes pleasure and delight in, he is continually acting of it ; that which pleaseth us best we think we can never have too much of it ; as soon as the Apple pleased *Eve*, she stood no longer to dispute God's Authority or Command, but presently eat it, so that sin which is a man's most pleasing and delightful sin, let God say what he will or his Ministers, they will keep it still.

7. That sin which a man is most loath of all to part with, that is his own sin, 1 *King.* 21. 2, 3. so tell some sinners that if they will leave their sins, they shall have better things from God ; Heaven and Happiness, oh nothing will do it ; a man will not sell away his own sin upon any terms, you may sooner cut of some
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mens necks, then part them from their sins, our *Saviour* compares these sins to right hands and right eyes, which men are most loath to part withal; these sins are like *Micahs* Images, 18. *Judg.* 23, 24. like *Rachels* Children, she mourned for them and would not be comforted, because they were not. O friends, pray search your hearts, look out the sin which you have been so often told off, and yet you will not leave it, this, this is the sin, your own sin, the sin which does you all the mischief, which will hazard if not prevented speedily to ruin your Souls.

And thus you see in these seven particulars, what is that sin which a man may call his own sin, having found it out which it is, the next thing is to find out the way how to be rid of it, and this leads me to the second particular, which is.

2. What we must do every one of us to keep our selves from our own sins.

Answer, we must proceed by these steps.

1. The first thing that is to be done is this, we must labour to see and know the evil of them. If a man hath a Child, though

though he be the rudest, idlest varlet in all the Country, yet till he know him to be so, he will own him, love and embrace him, as well as any of the rest of his Children; if a man hath a Servant that is a Thief, or one that is a waster of his time and his Masters goods, yet if he think him to be a good and a faithful Servant, he will keep him for all that; so is it here as long as we think well of our sins, we shall never part from them. Oh this is our first work and great work, to labour to see the evil of our own Iniquities, and here I shall shew you two things.

1. That this is a very hard work, for any man truly and rightly to be enformed of the evil of his own sin.

2. That this must first be done before we can keep our selves from it.

1. That 'tis an hard work, &c.

1. Because 'tis our own, that which we love: Men love to wink at the faults of those they love; as the Apostle saith, charity covereth a multitude of sins, so love to any sin will blind our eyes, that we cannot see the evils, the multitude of evils that are in it; 'tis like *Solomons* love to his Wives, it was so great, that he could

could not see the Evils in them, though he were a man of such excellent Wisdom, but suffered them to draw away his heart from God.

2. Because we not only fall in love with our own sins, but even love the evils of them. As men not only love their own Children, but love the very blemishes that are in them. *Solomon* hath an expression to this purpose, 8. *Prov.* 36. Death, that is one of the evils and mischiefs, that our own sins will bring upon us, or rather it comprehends in it all the evils of sin, 2. *Gen.* 17. and do you think that any man loves death, no, men love not a natural much less an Eternal Death, and yet sin will draw them to it, their own sins will make them in love with their own destructions.

3. Because we are unwilling to take up any report against our own sins, we will never believe what is told us of them, 40. *Jer.* from the 12th verse to the end of the Chapter; and the 41. Chapter verse the second; so is it here, tell men of their own sins, they will not believe us, tell them their swearing, or drinking, or rioting, or profaneness will bring damnation

tion on them, they will but scoff at us for our pains; they hope, they will say, to be saved for all this, and tell us there is not so much harm in this thing as men account.

4. Because we are ready to be angry with those that reprove our own sins, 4. *Gal. 16.* so, many Persons think we love them not, because we love not their sins; and are enemies to them, because we are enemies to their sins, oh they hate us for reproving their sins, 2 *Cor. 12. 15.* so *Ahab* he hated *Micaiah*, I hate him saith he, I cannot abide him, and why so, he never Prophesieth good concerning me but evil. *Micaiah* shewed him the evil of his sin, and therefore *Ahab* was so hot against him. Thus lay these things together, and you will see that 'tis a very hard work, for any man to be truly and rightly informed of the evil of his own sin.

2. Yet, secondly this must be done; we must first see the evil of our sins before we can cast them off, no wise man will cast off his old friend and acquaintance for no cause, no man in his right mind will cut of his right Arm, while 'tis sound and well before he is sure 'tis gangrened,

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may let me tell you we must see a great deal of evil in our own sins, before we can keep our selves from them. What an hard matter was it for *Eli* though a good man, to cast of his Sons after he heard of all their wickedness, at last he reproves them but faintly. Oh when men come to see this, then how willingly will they part with all their sins, when they see that sin will bring them to Hell, then away with it 16. *Luk.* 1, 2. so shall we deal with our best beloved sins, which have been like the stewards of our hearts, when we once come to see the evil of them, that they seek to ruin us. O Brethren, for your Souls sake do not shut your eyes against this, be willing to hear all that you can hear of your own sins, do not mince the matter, the evil will else fall on your own heads, and you will smart for it another day.

2. Give this sin no entertainment, and you shall quickly be rid of it. As we say of the Gout it goes to rich men, because it there fares best; know this, sin where it fares best there it will stay longest: 'Tis like a Beggar, give him a bountiful Alms and you shall have him at your door again

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the sooner, 1 Cor. 9. 27. I keep under my body i.e. my body of sin, the best way to keep sin away is to keep it under, for 'tis of a ruling and domineering nature; and therefore the Saints that have got the mastery of their sins, they can thrust them away easily.

3. Chuse another love whom you may set your affections and all your delight upon, and that is Jesus Christ, *postquam nos Amaryllis habet Galatæa reliquit*, love Christ and you shall not love any sin more; you will see that in Christ that deserves all, and more than all your love and affections, 1 Thess. 1. 9. when they turned to God, they turned from Idols; so when we turn our affections to Christ, we shall turn them from sin; we shall never have list to sin more: Old friends we say are like old cloaths, we give them away when we have new ones; so here, though sin be thy old friend, yet for Christ's sake thou wilt part with it, 4 Eph. 22, 24. the best way to cast off the old man is to put on the new man; O sinners, I know that your sins are dear unto you, and you think them best; but come and see Christ, and you shall see that in him, which will

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be far better to you than all your sins; when you have once put on Christ, or the new man, you will for ever after cast off the old man.

4. You must not dispute the case at the bar of flesh and blood, whether you shall part with your own sins or no. Flesh and sin are sworn Brothers, like *Herod* and *Pilate* both agree against Christ; flesh will plead for sin, because flesh knows no other happiness but in sin, hence is that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 15. 50.* you must away with flesh, when you would consult for the good of your Souls; always flesh will hinder us in whatever is good, *1 Gal. 15, 16.* had *Paul* consulted with flesh, he had never been a Preacher, flesh would have said to him as *Peter* to Christ, Master save thy self: 'Tis a dangerous time now to renounce thy sin, it will breed thee a great deal of trouble, if thou turn from sin, thou wilt have all the World about thy ears; therefore dispute not the case with flesh.

5. Deny self; self-denial is as a deadly wound given to sin, that it cannot lift up its head any more, *16. Mat. 24.* self-denial, I will tell you what it is, it is the

giving up the Keys, and the sole command of the whole man unto Christ: Then Christ is the Lord Lieutenant of thy heart, and nothing can be done without leave from Christ; now put Christ in office, and Christ^{he} will quickly put sin out of office. Oh! 'tis this self that keeps in sin; when grace like *Joab* goes out to fight against sin, then self like *David* calls out, deal kindly with the young man *Ab-salom*, oh spare my sin, my beloved sin, my only sin. O Brethren, have a care of bringing self to Church with you; all the Sermons you hear will do you no good, self will hinder you in all your duties, because it will not suffer your own Iniquities to be touched; self 'tis like *Jehu*, down with *Ahab* and all his Family, down with *Baal* and all his Priests, but the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel* must stand still; zeal cast down the first, but self made the other to stand; self will suffer any sin but our own sin, our own Iniquity to be killed.

6. Look into the Scriptures, and there you shall see, that you shall be no losers but gainers by parting with your sins, 2 *Chron.* 25. from the 6th to the 10th verse,

so many will say what shall we do to live, we live by our sins, we gain by our sins, (19. *Acts*. 24, 25. so some say we must cozen now and then, or we cannot live by our trade, we must to the Ale-house now and then, or we cannot get a good bargain) do you so, the Devil may take such gain if he will ; but know this, that God is able to do more for you than sin can do, 2 *Kings* 1. 2, 3. what, is there not a God in Heaven to provide for you, that you must go to sin, and the Devil to get a lively-hood. *Saul*, he never went to the Devil before God had left him, and answered him no more ; but alas, how many run to the Devil before God hath left them ; what, is there never a promise in the whole Bible, to comfort your hearts, but you must go to sin for comfort ? is not Heaven rich enough and glorious enough to make you happy, but you must have sin also to lye in the scales ? O remember this if you part with your best sins, you shall be no losers.

7. Be much in spiritual duties, pray much against this sin, this thine own sin ; read much, hear much, meditate of Christ and Grace, of God and Heaven much ;

perform these duties with a desire to be revenged on thy own sin. As *Sampson* when he prayed to God for strength, it was that he might be avenged on the *Philistins*. Brethren, we Pray to God for grace, but 'tis not with this intent that it might kill this sin, and therefore we pray amiss; when we hear a Sermon it is not with intent to get knowledge how to mortifie this sin, and therefore we hear in vain; and mark this, whatever spiritual duty we perform, if we do it not with an intent especially against this sin, it is to no purpose. *David* when he chose out five flint stones, it was with an intent to kill *Goliath* with them, and when he flung them, he aimed at his head; so let us do in all our spiritual duties, level them so that we may take aim at this sin especially, and then we shall prosper, *1 Kings 22. 31*. Alas what is it to kill a Thousand common Soldiers in an Army of Twenty Thousand, kill the General and you have won the Field; we Fight in vain, unless we Fight against this King of sins in us.

8. Labour as much as you can to thwart this particular sin; we use to say one contrary will expel another; look you what

is contrary to thy corruption, exercise thy self in that grace or vertue; the way to make a crooked stick strait, is to bend it as much the contrary way. Is Covetousness thy sin, then be much in giving Alms, be much in meditating of the riches of Heaven, follow our Saviours Counsel in the 19th of *Mat.* 21. Is Drunkenness thy sin, Pray for the Spirit of God, 5. *Eph.* 18. Art thou given to Pride, labour for Humility, and think meanly of thy self, think the best of others; drive in grace as much as you can into the heart, and that will drive out sin, especially that particular grace that is opposite to this sin, to cure a Wound, you must get a suitable Plaster for that Wound, so for the cure of this sin you must get a suitable grace.

9. If after all this that you have done, you cannot yet work out this sin, then go to God and beg of him, beg earnestly of him to do it for you, 2 *Chron.* 20. Chap. 1, 4, 12. so if thou art afraid of this sin, and dost seek the Lord with all thine heart God will assuredly help: But the truth is, we have no heart to Pray against this sin, and therefore the Lord doth not hear our Prayers; we deal with our sins as *Pharaoh*

with his *Frogs* in the 8th. of *Ex.* 8, 9, 10. so we would fain be rid of this sin many of us but not yet, why not before we come to dye, when we are leaving the World, then we could be content to leave this sin; O this is a sin that we do not desire to part with it, and if we will not part with it now, we shall never part with it. O of all things let us have a care of such a frame of spirit as this is, least God in judgment give us over to dye in this sin, as we have desired all our days to live in it.

3. Why we should above all things keep our selves from our own sins.

David in the Text tells us, that he kept himself from his Iniquity שָׁמַר מִפְּשָׁעוֹ the word (as I shewed you in the beginning) signifieth to prevent a danger that is likely to fall on us, there is a Noun comes from this Verb, which signifieth a Watch-tower, as sentinels in a Garrison that stand in the Watch-tower, espy the Enemy afar off coming to them before he seizes upon them, and so prevents his design, so *David* though he fell into other sins, and was surprized as it were by other sins, yet this sin which he calls his own sin, he had a special

special eye unto, was always upon his guard, his Watch-Tower to prevent it ; certainly there was something in it, *David* saw good reason for it, that made him more carefull of this sin than of all others.

Now I will shew you some Reasons, why we ought to be so careful against our own Iniquities.

1. Because we love it so much, this sin is the Souls darling, the Souls beloved, look into your hearts and search them well, and you shall find a sin there, that you love better than God, or Christ, or Heaven, or your Souls. It is said of *Ahab*, that he sold himself to do wickedly, oh this was an high prized sin, what sell himself for a sin? and are there not many *Ahabs* among us, that will sell themselves for some sin or other : A mans self is the highest price that he can set upon any sin, that which we love best we prize most, be it an horse, or a dog, I will not take an Hundred Pound for it : But for a man to sell his Soul to the Devil, nay Soul and Body to Hell to be tormented in the Fiery Lake of Brimstone Eternally for a Sin, you will say that man pays dear enough for it. O Friends,
here

here you see the force of the Reason, keep your selves from this sin, your love and affections from it, because this is the sin that will take up all your love, will take off your heart from God and Christ and your Salvation. A man while he is suit-
ing, and hath deeply set his love upon a Woman, will neglect all his other busi-
ness that he may gain her for a Wife; is it so with you in reference to any sin? Bre-
thren I desire to deal plainly and faithfully with your Souls and mine own, have a
care of that sin, have a care of loving of it,
least you hate your Souls and hate God and
Christ. I will explain this by a compari-
son, this sin is like *Absalom*, *Absalom* you
know was *Dauids* beloved Son, and *Ab-
lom*^{ho} strives to take away *Dauids* Kingdom
and also his Life, well for all this *David*
loves him still, and was too fond over him
for all this, and was loath to part with him,
and when he was killed, see how he mourns
for him in the 2 *Sam.* 18. 33. so here this
sin is your *Absalom*, the sin you are so fond
off, the sin you love so well, and do you
not know that this sin will take from you,
like *Absalom*, the Kingdom of Heaven, and
the life of your Souls, and yet all this will
not

not take off your love from it, as *David* said of *Abalom*, would to God I had dyed for thee, so you are willing to dye Eternally and go to Hell, rather than part with it. O Friends, if you love your Souls, have a care of that sin which you love most, and keep your selves from it.

2. Because this sin hath the more power over us, and can do with us what it pleaseth. If a man love his Wife too much he makes her his Mistress, so if a man love any one sin too much, he makes that sin his Mistress, the Queen regent of the Soul; and when it comes once to this he cannot leave that sin, no if he would give a World; all the Sermons in the World can do such a man no good; you hear a good Sermon, telling you, if you desire to be saved you must do so and so, oh, but first of all you must ask leave of this sin, whether you may do it or no, if this sin forbid you to Pray, you must not Pray, nay when a man is at Prayers and would confess such and such miscarriages of his life, this sin, this Master sin, often forbids him so much as to name them. This sin will not let a man repent, nor turn to Christ, like *Dalilah* it binds the strongest
Sampson

Sampson, and keeps many a great professor from turning a true real Christian mark, the Apostles exhortation in the 6th of the *Rom.* 12. βασιλεύτω. O let not sin be King in your Souls ; O therefore have a care of this sin, it will be *aut Caesar, aut nullus* ; if you let it alone to get the upper hand of you, you will hardly ever get rid of it. Methinks the Apostle in that 6th of the *Rom.* 12. alludes to a forreigner that hath got to a Kingdom ; he displaceth all the native Inhabitants from all places of honour and trust, brings in his own Countrymen, makes them Lords and Governors of the Land, so if sin comes to be King in the Soul, down goes every good thought, every good word, all goodness in that Soul, sin sets up new lusts and corruptions to reign and command there ; so the Apostle, if sin be King you must look then to obey all its lusts.

3. If we can but keep our selves from this sin, we shall with ease keep our selves from all other sins, 1 *Sam.* 17. 51. So here, kill but this *Goliath* and you may easily conquer all the multitude of other sins ; and therefore the best way to endeavour to convert a man, is to mark what is his
own

own sin, his own Iniquity ; kill that and you may save his Soul alive, shew him but the evil of this sin, and he will never like sin any more. And therefore *Junius* and *Tremellius* render the words of the Text thus, *caveo mihi ne quid inique agam* ; tho they be not an exact Translation according to the Original, yet may serve for a good comment upon the Text ; he that keeps himself from this sin, will keep himself from all sins ; when Christ converted *Paul* he begins with his great sin, shews him the evil of that ; *Paul* tells us what his great sin was in the 1 of the *Cor.* 15. 9. And every where *Paul* bemoans himself for this sin, this was the sin that *Paul* was most proud off, and was never well, but when he was committing and acting of it, 8. *Acts* 3. 9. *Acts* 1. Well Christ, he begins with this sin, 9. *Acts* 4, 5. As soon as *Paul* saw the evil of this sin, he presently forsook every sin. Brethren, I know this if Ministers would deal faithfully with you, they must tell you of your own sins, but then you will fly in their faces, this is no pleasing Doctrine ; we may Preach before a company of Drunkards against Covetousness, against Deceit, against

gainst Fornication, against Bribery and Injustice, why all is well, but if we come to speak against Drunkenness, there we drive the nail to the quick, it will not be endured: O but Friends if you love your Souls, be willing to hear the evil of your own sins as well as other mens sins, till you leave this you will leave none, if you can but keep your selves from this, you may keep your selves from all others.

4. Because this sin stands most in competition with Christ for the heart. Other sins will be content with a mean entertainment, but this sin must have the best, this sin must be served before Christ; look upon a man whose sin is Covetousness, any little thing as a cold morning will keep him from a Sermon, but rain, snow or blow, he will to the Market, Covetousness, that must be served or else he is sick, though Christ he thinks may be contented with once a moneth. O Friends, do not you cry out upon the *Jews*, and be worse than the *Jews* your selves, 18. *John* 39, 40. do you not deal worse with Christ, for a lust, or you that can part with Christ for a pleasure; do you think that sin deserves your hearts better than Christ, why then

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then can you not be perswaded to leave sin and follow Christ, but you chuse to follow your sins and leave Christ; every one that loves this sin, cries up *Barabbas* and denies Christ, you bid Christ be gon, as the *Jews*, away with this Fellow. As the *Jews* could not save Christ and *Barabbas* both together, so neither can we keep this sin and Christ both in one heart; all that entertain this sin, shut Christ out of their hearts.

5. Because this sin continually besets us, 'tis the sin as I told you, that lies down with you, that riseth up with you, that keeps at home with you, that goes abroad with you; as the Covetous man is Covetous at all times and in all places, even when he is at Church, then his heart is set on his Covetousness, a Drunkard is so at all times, thinking of it at Church, and continuing it a bed. Now if it be so, we had need be the more careful of it: A man that is subject upon the taking of any little cold to get an ague, had need always to keep himself very warm: In dangerous times when men lye at the catch for any word, a man had need consider well before he speak: O Brethren, sin is the greatest

est trapper in all the World, it lies at the catch continually to deceive our Souls, oh we had need be careful and watchful over our Souls, a man may be undone by sin before he is aware of it; and therefore the Apostle upon this account gives us a special charge against this sin and calls it *ἡ συνέσις ἡ ἀμαρτία* the sin which doth so easily beset us, 12. *Heb.* 1.

6. This one sin will damn thy Soul as well as Thousands, though we should leave all other sins but this, yet this will carry us to Hell. We do not read of *Judas* that ever he was guilty of any sin but one, and that was Covetousness, it was his Master sin, and yet that one sin brought both Hell into his Soul, and also carried his Soul to Hell. O how happy might *Judas* have been, had he but kept himself from this his own Iniquity. Friends do not deceive your Souls, you have but a few days to live before you shall go either to Heaven or Hell, do not boast that you are not Drunkards, or Swearers, or Lyers, &c. as others, if there be but one sin that you love, it will make God to hate you for ever; cries the *Pharisee*: in the 18th of *Luke* 11, 12. God I thank thee, that I am not

as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, &c. O, but this *Pharisee* had a sin for all this, that would carry him to Hell. A Prisoner that is Arraigned for murder, may plead that he never cut a purse, broke open an house, robbed on the High way, committed Treason against his Prince, but all this will not serve his turn, Murder will hang him. O think of this, ~~and~~ this one sin will bring you to Torments enough, 2 *James* 10, 11, 12. A seventh Reason we have in this very *Psal.* and 'tis this, when afflictions and tribulations come upon us, this will be our great comfort, that we have kept our selves from our own Iniquities. *David* tells us his own experience in this *Psal.*, that God was with him to stand by him in all his troubles, because he kept himself from his Iniquity, read but v. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. and the Reason in the 21, 22, and 23. verses. Beloved, would you have God to stand by you in all your troubles, then cast away your sin, 55. *Psal.* 22. a man under afflictions that hath this sin about him, is like a man cast into the Sea with a Millstone about his neck, he is sure to sink to the bottom; sin venom's the

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wound

wound of every affliction. O Brethren, cast out this sin, that God may not cast you off in the day of your adversity, Summer will not always last, Winter must come, and what will you do if God will not own you; let me tell you further, when under afflictions you would be willing to be rid of this sin, but then you shall not; as you have kept it in spite of God, it shall then be always with you to torment you. O think upon it, before God lays troubles and afflictions upon you, you cannot but expect them, for your sins have deserved them, therefore I say think upon it before hand which you will chuse, God to be your comforter in your miseries, or keep this sin to add sorrows to all your afflictions, 5. *Lam.* 15, 16. the joy of our heart is ceased, our dance is turned into mourning, the Crown is fallen from our head, wo unto us that we have sinned: But every true Saint may rejoyce with *David* under his afflictions, I have kept my self from my sin, and now will my God keep me under all my sorrows.

8. The last Reason is in the Text. This is the surest testimony of our Sincerity and Uprightness before God, read the Text,
and

and the 22th of Gen. 12. So may God say to us, now I know that you love me, seeing for my sake you have parted with your most beloved sin. This is the only pleasing and delightful sacrifice to God, 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3. all without love to God is nothing; and sure that man loves God but a little, that will not part with one sin for his sake. God shewed his love to us in giving us his own Son, O let us shew our love to God in parting with our own sin: In a word, here is *totum Leg's & Evangelii* the sum and compendium of Christianity, to keep your selves from your own Iniquities. Unless you do this, you ~~may~~^{had} as good do nothing at all; you can never say that you have kept Gods Commandments, as long as you keep this sin in your hearts and bosoms. Nay, this sin will make all that you do sinful and odious in the sight of God; you may pray your selves dumb, kneel your selves lame, read your selves blind, hear Sermons till you be deaf, give alms so long till you be poor, and yet all is nothing in the sight of God, while you keep this Iniquity in your hearts; you may be great professors, and yet if you have this sin, you must to Hell

for all that. Brethren, deceive not yourselves, 'tis not the hating of Ceremonies in the Church, but the hating this sin in your hearts, that will be acceptable in the sight of God. Hell is the place that God hath prepared on purpose for Hypocrites, and all those (be they what they will of this or that opinion of this or that Sect, Conformists or Nonconformists) that have not kept themselves from their own Iniquities, this great sin are but Hypocrites in the sight of God.

Application.

1. Use shall be a use of Information in diverse particulars.

1. Here we may see the Reason why so many go to Hell; 'tis their best beloved sins that carry them thither. Those sins which we account our greatest happiness here, are they which bring men to their Everlasting Torments. Every natural man like *Jacob* hath his *Benjamin*, his darling sin, and as *Jacob*, had rather he and his whole Family should starve than part with his *Benjamin*, so the most of us had rather lye Eternally in Hell, than part with this *Benjamin* our own Iniquity. O what

a desperate hazard do every one of us run into, by keeping and maintaining this one sin in our hearts, if a man might be permitted to go to Hell and talk with the damned there; and ask them all there severally, wherefore came you hither, and wherefore came you hither, they would all make this Answer; oh, we were loath to part with our own Iniquities, one would say I loved such a sin too much, another, O I loved such a sin too much &c. else we had not been here. Brethren, we see what it is that will bring us to destruction, that will ruin our Souls; 'tis that which we now love so well, the sin that lies in our bosoms. These sins, like the *Israelites* dainty Quails, which they lusted so much after, will assuredly bring down the wrath of God upon us.

2. Here we see the Reason likewise, why so few are converted by the Gospel; because the Gospel bids us cut off right hands, and pluck out right eyes, part with that which is most dear unto us; the Gospel bids the Drunkard leave his drunkenness, the Swearer leave his swearing, the Covetous man to leave his Gold and Silver, the Proud man to despise honor and

embrace humility; in a word, it bids every man to leave his own Iniquity, O this is an hard saying, who can bear it, flesh and blood can never endure it. Away with such a Gospel as this is, cry men, this will turn the World upside down. Let *John Baptist* Preach what he will before *Herod*, he can like his Doctrine well enough, but when he comes to tell him he must part with his beloved *Herodias*, away with him to Prison, 'tis not fit such a man should live upon the earth. *Paul* may Preach as long as he please at *Ephesus*, till he comes to Preach down *Diana*, then will *Bemetrus* presently raise a tumult against him; so the Young Man in the 19th Chap. of St. *Matthews* Gospel, what Christ said to him from the 16 to the 20 verse was all well, Christ had not as yet touched his sore place, he spake nothing of his beloved sin, well but you shall see what follows verses 21, 22. here the shooe pincht him, when Christ comes once to tell him of his beloved sin, to touch that he had enough, away he goes: Sinners turn their backs on Christ, as soon as Christ bids them turn their backs upon their own Iniquities. We are all of us like *Naaman*, in the 2 *Kings* 5.

17, 18. God must bate us an ace if he expects us to be his Servants; we make our terms with God to have our liberty in one sin or other, which we like best. O we think that God is a very hard Master, and that he is too strict and severe with us to debar us of every sin; like *Agrippa*, we are contented to meet Christ above half ways, to be almost Christians, *i.e.* Christians in every thing save in one thing, *i.e.* in keeping still our own sin, but that we can by no means part withal. Now I hope you see the Reason why so few are converted, and why all our Preaching proves no more profitable unto you, blame not us but blame your selves for it; we may say as *David* said, these Sons of *Zeruiab* are too hard for us, as to other things we may perswade you and prevail somewhat; but when we come to speak against this sin, your own sin, there is little or no hope to prevail with you. This sin is the *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils, and 'tis not all the Apostles of Christ, unless Christ himself come powerfully into your Hearts can cast him out.

3. Here we see the folly of sinners, who for the short pleasure of some beloved sin

or other, will venture to undergo the pains of the damned, the torments of Hell and the Wrath of an Almighty God, 21. *Ex.* 1, 2, 5, 6, verses, the case is the same here; the Gospel is nothing else but a proclamation of liberty to the Captives, all that will leave their sins may come to Christ and be made free, well, but their are some like the *Israelites* servants, that will say I love my sin, which is my Master, and as dear to me as Wife and Children; I will not go out free, oh these are the Persons that have their ear boarded, never shall Sermon do them good, never shall ordinance do them good, they shall serve sin for ever, God will fulfill their desires, as they are unwilling to part with sin, so shall they never part with sin, they and their sins shall live and dye and go to Hell together. O the folly and fondness of sinners, that are so unwilling to part with their sins, let such know this before sin and they part, they shall have enough of it; you that tast the sweet of sin, remember that you must tast the sour also, sin like *St. Johns* Book, though it seem to you as sweet as honey in the mouth, yet it will be as bitter as gall and wormwood in the Bowels.

Bowels. O let us remember this, that our Souls are our own as well as our sins, and one of them we must part withal, here is the tryal, which we love best our own Sins or our own Souls, that which we love best we will not part withal, 3. *Acts* 19. No sin shall be blotted out at the day of Judgment, but those sins that are cast out here; cast them out of your hearts, and God will soon blot them out of his Book. O that sinners were but as wise in preventing, as they shall be woful in undergoing the everlasting sorrows, which shall follow their short sinful pleasures. 'Tis but a foolish bargain, that every sinner makes to purchase eternal pains for momentary pleasures, to chuse rather to be turned out of Heaven, then to turn one sin out of thy heart.

4. Here we see likewise the Reason, why People are so in love with sin, which is so ugly in its own nature, and so odious in the sight of God. If we had the true picture of sin, drawn to the life before our eyes, together with the Judgments of God in this life, and the Torments of Hell in the other life, carrying up its train, we could not but sit down and wonder at the mad-

madness of our hearts, that we should so much dote upon it or fall in love with it. O but wonder not, here's the Reason, every man loves one sin or other because 'tis his own sin. Do not some of you wonder why *David* should love *Absalom* so well, a Murderer, a Traytor, what not, one that in many respects dealt worse with *David* than ever *Saul* did, one that was a continual grief to *David*, yet he loved him dearly for all this, would you know the Reason, see it in the 2 of *Sam.* 19. 4. why, he was his own Son, that was the Reason. Do you wonder that men can love sin so well, which is a Traytor in their bosoms, the Destroyer of their Souls, the only hindrance of their Eternal Happiness, oh here's the reason, 'tis their own sin, a Babe conceived in the womb of their own hearts, nursed up and suckled in their own Breasts. All men are mightily taken with their own things; the Proverb is every mans own goose is better than his Neighbors swan, so is it with sin we do hate sin others, but we love it in our selves, nay the very same sins that we hate in others, we hug them while they are in our own bosoms; the truth is this, when ever a wicked

wicked man hates sin, he doth not hate it as it is sin, but because it is not his sin, if it were his sin he would love it as well as others; nay and perhaps this man that hates one sin in his Neighbour, may as dearly love another sin in himself, see an example in the 38. *Gen. 24, 25, 26.* we look not upon our own sins, with the same pair of spectacles that we look on other mens sins withal: Men will never think their own Children to be so ill as other mens Children are, though perhaps they be a great deal worse. Here lies the great deceit, and that which doth our Souls all the mischief our owning of sin so far as to countenance it, and all the evil actions that come from it: If we could but once disown sin, we should quickly be out of love with it.

5. Here we may see what is the chief work and duty of Ministers; 'tis to persuade men what they can against their own Iniquities, and bring them out of love with their own sins, 58 of *Is. 1.* *Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my People their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins;* and this hath been always the practice of the
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Prophets and Apostles of Christ, in all their Sermons and Preaching. *Noah* he reprov-
ed the men of the old World for their sins,
Elijah he dealt plainly with *Ahab* and re-
proved him for his sin, the Murder of *Na-
both* ; *Nathan* the Prophet he comes blunt-
ly to *David* and tells him thou art the man.
John Baptist he tells *Herod* of his *Herodias*,
and *Paul* when he Preached to *Felix* and
Drusilla, he reasoneth of righteousness and
temperance, whereby he plainly intima-
ted what was his Iniquity. General Preach-
ing is as good as no Preaching at all ; Mi-
nisters must not only tell People of sin, but
of their sins. Should a Physician come to
a sick man, and discourse learnedly before
him of the nature and causes of sickness in
general, and not tell him what is his di-
sease and sickness, and tell him what means
he must use against it, this would do him
no good ; such are all our Learned Sermons
and quaint discourses, &c. Brethren, we
have to deal with sinners, sin in Scripture
is a sickness ; now we must tell every man
what is his sin, and what may be a means
to bring him out of the snare of the De-
vil ; such general Preaching is like pro-
phecying in an unknown tongue, which
the

the Apostle saith in the 1 Cor. 14. 9. is speaking into the air, 'tis Preaching at random. He is not a good Soldier that knows only, how to discharge his Musquet and let it off, but he must be skilfull how to level it that he may shoot his Enemy. He is not to be accounted for a good Preacher, that can make a quaint Sermon or a Learned discourse; but if we would do good by our Preaching, we must tell every one of his own Iniquities; we must not Preach against the sins of the Court in the Country, nor against the sins of the Country at Court; we must not set men against other mens sins, but every man against his own sins. The Prophets did not go to *Samaria* to Preach against the sins of *Jerusalem*, nor to *Jerusalem* to Preach against the sins of *Samaria*. This will do you most good, will make most for the health of your Souls. Thus Brethren, you see what is the duty of Ministers if they would do you any good, and I hope none of you will be offended at us, if we deal so plainly aand faithfully with you. Here are some that have been angry with me for Preach-

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seems thought
he dealt too
plainly with
them in telling
them of & re-
proving them
for their sins.*

ing thus, but let them know that they themselves are the greatest enemies to their own Souls. If you chuse a Lawyer to manage your case for you at the common Law, and he states your case wrong, and you loose the Suit by it, will you not call him

Knave for his pains; what then will you call us Ministers in Hell, if we deal not now plainly and faithfully with your Souls. I never yet heard other-ways amongst honest men, but that plain dealing was ever accounted best. This is the Anvil that we must strike upon, tho thereby we make the sparks to fly about our ears.

6. And lastly, here then we see the righteousness and the justice of all Gods dealings with us. He is righteous in the extremity of all his proceedings against us. May we not say of *England* as the Prophet of *Tyrus* in the 28. *Ezek.* 12, 15, 18. v. do we not keep those sins in our hearts, which bring down God's Judgments upon our Houses; can we expect it should be other-

otherways with us, when we are resolved not to part with our sins. How can we expect while we own sin, but that God should disown us, while we countenance Iniquity, but that God should discountenance us, while we suffer our hearts to be over-run with these bryars and thorns, but that God should make us fuel for the fire of his indignation, 9. *Daniel* 13, 14. God hath publicly in his word proclaimed sin for a Traytor, and hath forbidden us upon pain of his heavy displeasure to harbour any sin in us, now if we make our hearts the rebellious houses of sin, God may justly fire our houses about our ears, and make our habitations like a dunghill. And therefore in all our miseries and calamities that have or may befall us, and under all the Judgments of God; let us cry out with the Church in the *Lamentations*, wo unto us that we have sinned, had not we loved sin, God would then have loved us.

2. Use of Reproof. If that we ought to keep our selves from our own Iniquities, then this reproveth,

1. Those who instead of keeping themselves from their Iniquities, keep up close and

and hide up their Iniquities; who deal with their sins as *Rachel* with her Idols, when *Laban* came to make a search after them, she hid them in the midst of the stuff. How many Persons are there that will not be known of their sins as if they knew not what they meant, tell the Swearer of his swearing, he denies it, he is not the man, or the Drunkard, or Covetous &c. Brethren, you deal unfaithfully with your Souls, why do you go thus to hide up your sins? I can tell you the true Reason, because you have no mind to leave them, the Scripture puts confessing and forsaking of sin together, and confessing is always first, and a means to the latter, 28. *Prov.* 13. I can tell you further, the Scripture puts confessing and forgiving together, 32. *Pf.* 5. So that no confessing no forsaking, no forsaking no forgiving. And this is the great danger that these sins our own Iniquities bring us into, keep us from confession and therefore seldom are pardoned. That man is in a forlorn condition, who when his sin like the Small-pox would break out, drives it in again and strikes it to the very heart; what a madness is it for a man to send to a Physician,

fician, and desire him to heal him, and yet will not be known of any disease that troubles him. So, this is desperate folly and hypocrisie, for men to come and pray to God to pardon their sins, and yet will not be known of any sin that is in them; of all things take heed of such sins as you cannot endure should be touched, or meddled with, or reproved, but will do all that you can to hide them, and keep them secret, these are your own Iniquities, and are very dangerous.

2. Those who instead of keeping themselves from their Iniquities, boast of them and glory in them, 3. *Is. 9.* Men are apt to boast and to brag of their own things, and so do sinners of their own Iniquities; as the Apostle *Paul* saith in another case; upon our uncomely members, we bestow the more abundant comeliness, so these Persons paint over and varnish what they can their uncomely sins, that so they may be more freely commit them, this is the very height of Impiety to boast and glory in our Iniquities; and were they not our own, we should not thus glory in them.

3. Those who instead of forsaking their own Iniquities, are partakers also with o-

ther men in their sins ; there is none of us all, but hath sins enough of his own to sink him to the bottom of Hell ; see what an account *David* gives us of his sins in the 40 *Psalms*. 12. if *David's* were so many, how many then are ours, oh what desperate madness then to add to that multitude, which we are not able already to number. These Persons I cannot better compare them, than to broken Tradesmen that have spent all, and run themselves so far in debt, that they are like to lye in the Goal all their days, why these Persons are the readiest Persons to be bound for other mens debts. This is the right and true adding sin to sin and Iniquity to Iniquity, adding the sins of others to our own sins. Now the best way to remedy this, is with *David* in the Text ; to keep our selves from our own Iniquities, and then we shall the better look to our selves, in keeping our selves from other mens sins ; that man that is unwilling to give a bond for his own debt, will never be surety, or enter into bonds for another man's debt.

4. Those who instead of keeping themselves from their own Iniquities, are drawing
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ing on others, and perswading others to commit the like sins with them. Brethren, I think our sin hath done mischief enough, or at least will do mischief enough, if it ruin and damn only our own Souls, oh then, why should we be so greedy of bringing others into the same guilt and condemnation with us; I think the World was never so full of such kind of Persons as 'tis now, sinners are stark mad that every body is not like them, and because they cannot draw others with them to the same excels of riot; sin is such a sweet bit, such a dainty morsel, that they love not to eat it alone, like some kind hearted men, who if they have a joynt of meat extraordinary, presently send for some Neighbours or Friends to dine with them. Brethren, this is the very Image and Superscription of the Devil, that these men carry in their foreheads, the Devil after he had sinned himself, have made it his work ever since to make us all Devils like himself, by drawing us into the same sins; now the best way to remedy this, is to keep our selves (as *David* in the Text) from our own sins, and when we see the evil of them our selves, we shall the more earnestly per-

swade all others, to keep themselves from them likewise.

3. Use Consolation to all those that can say with *David* in the Text, I have kept my self from mine Iniquity. This is the proper use of the Text, *David* he comforts himself with this consideration, this one thing was better to *David* than his honors and riches, than his Crown and Kingdom. This was *David's* cordial in the Wilderness, and his Song of rejoicing upon his Throne. I will desire you once more to look upon the Title of this Psalm, and read it over, a Psalm of *Ec.* in the Title *David* rejoiceth over his outward Enemies, among which he reckons *Saul* as the chiefest, but in the Psalm *David* triumpheth over his Spiritual Enemies, and among these he reckoneth his own Iniquity as the King, the chiefest v. 21, 23. this was a far greater comfort to *David*, that he kept himself from his own Iniquity, than his being kept from the power and malice of *Saul* his chiefest Enemy. And therefore *David* leaves this upon record for all the World to take notice of it; and seems to intimate thus much to us, that this was the Reason why God delivered him from his greatest Enemy,

Enemy, because he kept himself from his own Iniquity, v. 24 Here then beloved, we see the Fountain for a dry and thirsty Soul. Here is the true cordial in calamity, the surest comfort under the greatest conflict; let Men and Devils muster up all their Armies, and rally up all their Regiments against the Saints, they cannot hurt those who have kept themselves from their own Iniquities: Sincerity my Friends, is such armor of proof, that no bullets of afflictions, no chain shot of tribulations, no poysoned darts of Temptations, no fiery granadoes of persecutions are able to pierce or enter into That man that hath kept his own Iniquity out, need not fear any sorrows entering into his Soul. No wonder that those who keep common tipling-houses, to which Drunkards and Swearers, and wicked Persons of all sorts have free resort, are seldom quiet, but singing and ranting, railing and reviling, wrangling and fighting are the dayly dishes they feed upon. Just so are the hearts of all sinners, where this Iniquity as the Master, keeps a common Inn for all other sins to resort unto, their is no quietness no comfort, no peace in that Soul, 57. *Isaiah 20.*

21. 'tis seldom that a sinner dines a good day ; and therefore *Solomon* tells us that even in laughter the heart of the wicked is sorrowful, 2 *Kin.* 9. 22. this thine Iniquity is the true *Jezebel*, and all other sins are but her brats and bastards ; cast out this *Jezebel* and thy Soul shall live, fling but this *Jonas* over-board and their will be presently a calm. O the Heaven that there is in that Soul, whereinto neither this Iniquity, nor any other wicked thing doth enter. Give me leave in a few words as I am able to shew you some part of the happiness of that man that can say as in the Text, I have kept, &c.

1. There is nothing ^{now} to hinder the Union and Marriage between Christ and that Soul ; here what *Paul* tells us concerning the Laws of Wedlock, in the 1 *Cor.* 7.39. This is the case of every man, while we are in our natural unregenerate condition (mark it well) we are wedded every one of us to this our own Iniquity, every Soul is bound to this Husband ; now the Ministers they publish the Banns of Marriage between Christ and the Soul, will you sinners accept of Christ, Christ is desirous to have you, he hath a great love to your Souls,

Souls, he is willing to espouse you, to make you happy; every Minister is the Friend of the Bridegroom, in every Sermon, we ask the Banns between Christ and your Souls, and tell you that Christ for his part is very willing, nay earnestly desirous of you, why then what is it that hinders, where doth it stick; O beloved, I will tell you the very truth, as I expect to answer for your Souls and mine own, at the great day of Judgment; why 'tis this sin our own Iniquity in every one of our own bosoms, that steps in and forbids the Bans, sin cries out the Soul is mine, 'tis my Wife, Christ hath nothing to do with her while I live. O Friends, consider seriously what you do, while you maintain this sin in your hearts, you stand most in your own light, and refuse Christ to be your Husband. But now kill this sin, and then you are free to accept of Christ, and here is the happiness of every true Saint, Christ and his Soul is united, as soon as sin and his Soul is parted, 7. *Rom. 24.* it implies thus much; O how happy a man should I be, were I but once freed from this sin, which is as a body of death to me. I have read of a cruel Tyrant, who invented this cru-

el kind of death for Malefactors, that he did not kill them presently, but tyed them while they were living, to the stinking Carcasses of dead men, and so were pining to death by degrees, by the very noysomness of those Carcasses; O sin is a most noysom Carcass, could you but once smell the stink of it, you would cry out with the Apostle, O wretched Man or Woman that I am, &c. but the Soul that is freed from this sin, may sit and sing with the spouse, my beloved is mine and I am his. O the spiritual joy and comfort, that is in that heart, when Christ and the Soul meets. If *John* the Baptist leaped for joy in the Womb of *Elizabeth*, when the Virgin *Mary* came but into the House, how then will that Soul leap, when Christ is entred into the heart. But the wicked they loose this happiness, because they will not part with sin; what said *Balaam* to *Balak* in the 24. Num. 11. so will Christ say to sinners, depart from me ye cursed, flee away, I thought to have espoused you, and to have promoted you to great honor, but sin hath kept you back from honor and happiness.

2. There is no sin shall be laid to that
man's

man's charge, O this is a great happiness, and the most wicked Person in the World will acknowledge as much, and cry out, O that my sins were pardoned, O that God would not lay sin to my charge, 32. *Pf. 1, 2.* now this is the blessedness of every one, that keeps himself from his own Iniquity. Brethren, know this, that if we our selves do not own any sin, God will never Father any sin upon us, as soon as we cast any sin out of our hearts, God he presently blots that sin out of his Book, 18. *Ezek. 30.* O that you would but hearken to this word; turn from your Iniquity and your Iniquity shall not be your ruin. 8. *Rom. 1.* let not sin command you, and sin shall never condemn you. O here is comfort indeed; go to a poor Prisoner and tell him you will give him a great Estate a Thousand a Year, tell him how bravely he shall live then, and eat and drink of the best: O but saith the poor Prisoner I have committed a great fault for which the Judge will not pardon me, I must dye for it, and what will all these things that thou dost promise do me good, If I had but my pardon to save my life, that is all that I desire, that's better than all; so here, tell

a man of worldly prosperity, and glory, and honour, and pleasures; alas, what will all this do me good, if my sins be not pardoned, and I must be sent to Hell; sin unpardoned, that causeth sorrow in the best of outward conditions, but sin pardoned causeth joy in the worst of all conditions; what saith such a man, what care I for poverty, losses, troubles, I can triumph in all, because I know that my sins are blotted out, and I shall be eternally happy.

3. All things shall work together for their good, 8. *Rom.* 28. now who are they that love God, why, we may certainly conclude, that 'tis they who do not love any sin. How did God testifie his love to us, but by parting with his own Son for our sakes; so shall we sufficiently testifie our love to God, if we can part with our own sin for his sake, now such and all such have this priviledge, that nothing shall hurt them, nay every thing shall do them good. All evils whatever, shall be to such Persons like *Josephs* Prison, the way to preferment. O what a comfort is this to us in a World so full of evils, evils of sin, evils of sufferings, evils of Tempta-

temptations, evils of afflictions. A sick man will joyfully drink the bitterest potion, when he knows it will do him good, so the Saints rejoyce and are comforted in all their miseries, here knowing that they shall work for their greater glory hereafter.

4. They shall have this priviledge to have their Prayers heard and answered; saith *David* in the 66. *Psal.* 18. if I regard Iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me; therefore by the rule of contraries, we may conclude, that if we do abhor, and forsake, and turn Iniquity out of our hearts, then God will hear our Prayers, 2. *Hof.* 17. what was *Baalim*, why this was their Iniquity, their great Idol, well what follows v. 21, :2. O Friends, consider well this priviledge, you that come to Church and say your Prayers, for what end is it that you Pray, if you desire not that God should hear you, if not you Pray in vain, if you desire that God should hear you, put away your Iniquities; we read of *Hannah*, that when God answer'd her Prayers, she was comforted, her countenance was sad no more, on the other side see the 4. *Gen.* 5. O we may guess
whi-

whither God hears our Prayers or no by our faces, and by mens very looks. O Friends, prize this priviledge of having your Prayers answered, and do not loose it for the love of a few sins, did you but know what is gained by Prayer, you would not part with this priviledge for all the sins in the World.

5. These Persons only are fit to dye, these are the Persons that do triumph over death, 1 Cor. 15. 55. Death is a cruel biting venomous Serpent, it makes the proudest to stoop, the strongest to tremble, lays the stoutest man upon his back, and makes the greatest Beauty to look pale; but now saith a Saint come death I fear thee not, I have taken out thy sting, which was mine own Iniquity, now do thy worst, I shall live in spight of thee, O you that are afraid to dye, come learn this lesson, learn how to un sting death; sin brought death into the World, turn out sin, and you shall not need to fear death. A man that is in debt, and hath a writ out against him, he is faine to hide and keep close, but as soon as the writ is out of date, then dare he boldly go abroad, and look the Serjeant in the face; when we are assured

fured, that our sin is cancelled out of God's Book, then death's writ signifies nothing to us, we can smile in the very face of this grim Serjeant. O learn to live without sin, that you may dye without sorrow, O how happy are all they, whom death it self the worst of evils cannot make miserable. And thus you see some of the parts of their happiness, who can say as in the Text, I have kept &c. here is comfort enough for any man, and Brethren, if you do but remember them so as to consider them again, you will find that it is a far greater happiness, than the greatest Kings and Princes in the World have in all their plenty and prosperity; here is happiness in life, all things work for our good; all our Prayers answered; at death, unsting it; at judgment, no sin charged; after, to all Eternity espoused to Christ and be with the Lord. But least any should take this comfort to themselves to whom it doth not belong, I will lay down some Marks and Characters of such Persons as those are, who keep themselves from their own Iniquities.

1. That man that keeps himself from his own Iniquity, he is one that hath felt the

the smart and burden of sin. No wise man after he hath made a good meal of such meat as he loves best, will presently take a vomit to cast it up, unless it make him sick, and load his stomach; so is it in respect of our beloved sins, till they vex us, we will not turn them out of doors; Like the *Egyptians*, who would be persuaded by no means to let *Israel* go, till they saw the Plagues that they suffered for it. 11. *Mat.* 28. *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden*; implying that none but such will come. Now let me ask you this Question, what is the Reason that some of you have parted from some sins, are these sins a trouble and burden to your Souls; or else do you not rather deal with sin, as *David* with *Absalom*, who banisht him the Court, but yet loved him for all that, if so, then know that you and sin are not rightly parted, you must cast sin out of your hearts, as the *Israelites* cast their leaven out of their houses, they were to curse it thence.

1. That man that hath kept himself from his own Iniquity, he is one that hath duly considered the great danger of sin; we all of us hate poyson, because we know it

it will cost us our lives, O, that we knew but sin as well, we should hate it as much. When *Jacob* knew that *Eſau* ſought his life, he preſently fled away from him; ſo did we, but know that ſin will aſſuredly ruin our Souls, though we love it never ſo well, we ſhould part with it. Like ſome fiſh who love the bait well, and therefore do ſwallow down the hook, but when they perceive the danger of the hook in their bodies, vomit up their beloved baits again. O ſirs have you ſeriously conſidered Death, Judgment and Hell; have you ever ſet the wrath of God before your eyes; if you have, I think you will never love ſin more.

3. That man that hath kept himſelf from his own ſin, will endeavour to keep others from their ſins alſo, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. all ſuch Perſons will be telling others the danger of ſin, and perſwading others what they can from ſin: *Paul* was no ſooner a Convert, but he preſently turned a Preacher. *Nemo acrior inter perſecutores, nemo prior inter peccatores Aug.* do you do ſo; are any of you ſenſible of the danger of ſin, you will be telling it to others. 'Tis in this caſe as in other caſes; have any of you

you kept a Servant in your houses that is a Thief, hath purloyned your goods, and embezel'd away any of your commodities, if you find him out, you will not only turn him away, but also forewarn all others from receiving him, telling them the danger of having such a fellow in their houses; so is it here if any man hath found out the danger of his own sin, and turned it out of his heart, he will forewarn all others of their sins, and perswade them what he can to do likewise.

4. That man that hath turned his own sin out of his heart, will be much in aggravating of it what he can, he will speak the worst of it that he can, nay, not only of that sin, but of every other sin also. If a Father be highly provoked by his Son, that he hath formerly been very tender of, so that he turns him out of doors, he will be always speaking against him wherever he goes, and will not endure that any should speak in his behalf. *Paul* before his conversion, took great delight in his sin, (*viz.*) in Persecuting the Disciples of Christ, but when once he was turned from it, he was always aggravating it to the height, and speaking the worst of it, and him.

himself for it that he could, as you may read in the first of *Tim.* 1. 13, 15. v. and in the 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. when men can connive or wink at their sins, or speak fairly of them, 'tis a sign that they have not yet renounced them. Suppose a man's own Iniquity be Covetousness, O he will seek to daub it over, and say, why I am ^agood Husband, I do but look after the main chance, when perhaps this man is as gripple a Worldling as any that lives; suppose his sin be swearing, he will plead for it thus, there is no such hurt in it, 'tis a trick that I have got and I cannot leave it, there be others that swear as well as I, or the like, 'tis a sign when men seek to extenuate their sins, or to plead for their sins, that they and their sins are still cater-cozens, they are not yet parted. O, but every true convert will loath his sin, and loath himself for it, 42. *Job* 6. here was a true sign of *Jobs* Repentance, in that he abhorred himself, and by the way, here we may learn a distinguishing mark and character, between a true convert and an unconverted Person; a wicked unconverted Person, always looks upon others as greater sinners than himself, and thinks other mens sins

worse behalf than his own. A true convert, thinks worst of himself and his own sins; so *Paul*, I am the chiefeft of finners.

5. That man that hath renounced his own sin, will live ever after in a quite opposite and contrary course to that sin, *1 Gal. 23.* *Paul* you see after his conversion, was as much for Christ as before he was against Christ, *1 Cor. 15. 10.* As before his conversion, he was more furious than all the Persecutors of Christ, so after he was more laborious, than all the Preachers of Christ. His zeal was still at the full tide, only it ran in a quite contrary channel; and this was a true mark, that *Paul* was a sincere convert, so if any of you would know the truth of your conversion; by this you may know it, are you as much against sin as you were formerly for sin? are you as much for godliness, as formerly you were enemies to it? if the heart be changed, the life will be changed; you may know that man hath cast off his old friend, if he seeks all manner of ways to undo him; so if you have cast off your old sin, your beloved sin, you will seek as much to destroy

destroy, as formerly to maintain it, 6.
Rom. 19.

6. That man that keeps himself from his own sin, will be less in censuring others for their sins. And the Reason is this, because he hath had experience enough what it is to grapple with sin, how easie a matter to be overcome by sin, and such a man lives in continual fear of sin, least he be foyled again, least sin should once more get into his heart, 6. Gal. 1. that man that hath conquered sin, knows the strength of sin, better than others, that have never so much as once encountred sin; he knows that sin will make the wisest *Solomon* a fool, the strongest *Sampson* weak, the meekest *Moses* angry, the most patient *Job* impatient, and the couragious *Peter* a coward. O he hath learnt by his own experience, to see that sinners have need of pity and prayers, rather than censures and revilings, 2 King. 8. 11, 12, 13. 'Tis a worthy Speech of Dr. *Harris* saith he, use no more words against mens sins, than thou wilt make Prayers for their Souls in secret. All the People of God will bewail sinners, while they are as confident as *Hazael*, 'tis a sign that man never went about to keep

his own sin out, that thinks others can leave their sins when they will.

7. He that hath parted with his beloved sin, will part with every sin. I have heard of many men, that have set their affections so strong upon some women, that when those women have cast them off, have professed that for their sakes, they would never Marry nor endure any women after; how strongly do sinners set their affections upon their beloved sins, but if it please God to convert them, that they and sin break, they will never endure any sin after, they have known so much by that one sin; when *Sarah* fell out with *Hagar*, she presently goes to her Husband *Abraham*, and bids him cast out not only *Hagar* the Bond-woman, but *Ishmael* her Child also; he that hath cast out this sin, will cast out all the retainers to it; every thing that doth but smell of sin, 1 *Thess.* 5. 22. here is a true note of sincerity, for when we are casting out of sin if we do not cast out every sin, we do as good as nothing, for if we cast out all but one, that one sin in time, will bring in all the rest, and many more again. When *Haman* was angry with *Mordecai*, he thought it
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it no revenge to kill him alone, for he knew that the rest of the *Jews* were like him, and therefore like a wise Polititian, he sought to destroy them all; do so with sin, put out every sin, they are all of the same gang. Kings when they make laws against such and such things, do not make them for particular Persons, if such a one or such a one, do so or so, he shall suffer so and so, but for all in general; so if Christ be King in thy heart, and thou be a convert one of his Subjects, his Laws will be general against every sin.

8. All they that have parted with this sin, their own sin, their beloved sin, will never return to it more, 2 *Sam.* 13. 15, 16, 17. so wilt thou deal with this sin, bolt and bar thy heart against it; the hatred will be irreconcilable, 17. *Ex.* 16. never make a league with this sin more, herein was *Jobs* sincerity, 34. *Job.* 32. such a man would not be in his former condition, living under the power of that sin, no not to gain Ten Thousand Worlds; they are dogs that return to their vomit, and Swine that return to their wallowing in the mire again; we do not read or very seldom of the Saints being twice in the same sin;

or if they have, yet they have not returned with delight to it, or it was not thoroughly purged out at first. In the Gospel we read when our Saviour cast out the Devil out of many Persons, he charged him never to return again, 9. *Mark* 25. so when Christ converts a Soul, he turns out sin, as here he turned out the Devil; so that tho sin still hanker about that man, yet it is never entertained more, 'tis never received into the heart more, there is not that love, familiarity and friendship, that their was before, but now if sin be only like a quartan Ague, to go away for a certain time and then return, that man is no true convert, but his estate is sad, like an Ague, the fit gets strength and returns more violently, there is a dreadful place to this purpose in the 11. of *Luk.* 24, 25, 26. and in the 2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

All these are sure and certain marks of that man, who like *David* in the Text, hath kept himself from his own Iniquity; and happy is that man that can find these in him; he is far happier than the greatest King or Prince in the World. We read of *Alexander* the Great, ~~and~~ when he had conquered the whole World, that he
fate

fate down and wept, that he had no more Worlds to conquer, he that hath conquered this sin, may rejoyce that he hath no more to conquer.

4. Use, is a use of exhortation to the duty in the Text, to keep your selves from your own Iniquities, this is a work you see of very great concernment, either this sin or your Souls must perish; Our Saviour Christ in the Gospel tells us, that 'tis better to pluck out a right eye, than to go to Hell with two eyes, and to cut off a right hand, than to go to Hell with two hands, and I suppose that he speaks it in reference to this very sin, our darling best beloved sin. O sirs, what will you do for your Souls? I may say to you concerning this sin, as *Abisbai* to *David* concerning *Saul*, *1 Sam. 26. 8.* O do not you answer as *David* did *Abisbai* at the 9th verse, when you have done this, the greatest part of your work is done; you will quickly find an happy change in you, were but this one sin thoroughly purged out.

In the further prosecution of this use, I will do three things.

1. I will shew you the great Myſtery of

this Iniquity, working and ruling in the heart, together with,

2. The deceitfulness of the heart in joyning with it, and hiding and cloaking of it.

3. And thirdly, the great mischief that follows thereupon.

2. I will answer some scruples or objections, that may be made by some concerning this Iniquity.

3. And thirdly, lay down the motives effectual to perswade every one against his own Iniquity, together with some further means and directions.

1. The great Mystery of this Iniquity, this consists of three particulars.

1. The Mystery of this Iniquity.

2. The hearts deceitfulness in joyning with it.

3. The great danger that follows upon it; each of these three, shews us the mischief of this sin, but all these three joyned together, make it the more dreadful and formidable. I begin with the first,

1. The Mystery of this Iniquity, and this is two-fold.

1. Its working into the heart.

2. Its working in the heart.

This

This sin is like a Traytor, who is first an Usurper and then a Tyrant; first it gets into the heart which is proper only to God, usurps his Throne; and then secondly, is as a Tyrant ruling and domineering there, O what havock doth it make there, and as Usurpers and Tyrants do get into the Throne, and when got in, strive to settle themselves there for ever, and this they do with a great deal of cunning and policy; so doth this sin, there is a great deal of policy in both its workings, first into the heart, 2ly in the heart. Now I will endeavour to shew you the great Mystery in both these workings.

1. The Mystery of this sin working into the heart, this I will lay down in these following particulars.

1. This sin it works altogether with the nature of every man. Here is a great deal of policy in this, sin carries on its design apace, when nature it self (I mean corrupt nature) works for it and with it; it always sail with wind and tide, and therefore so prosperously. For the better understanding of this, you must know what the heart of man is when he comes into the World, and the Prophet will tell

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us, in the 4. *Jer.* 3. 'tis fallow ground, and what doth fallow ground bring forth, why the latter part of the verse tells you thorns; what are these thorns? sins are thorns, and afflictions are thorns, but here 'tis meant of sin; and why doth fallow ground bring forth thorns, every one will tell us, 'tis the nature of it so to do; so that you see, 'tis as natural for a corrupt heart to breed sin, as for fallow ground to bring forth thorns. Now as every piece of ground brings forth those thorns, or briars, or bushes; which are most proper to the nature of the soil, so every man's heart naturally brings forth those sins, which are most proper to its nature; hence it is, that one man is by nature inclined to lust, another to covetousness, another to prodigality, another to malice, &c. here's the Mystery of this sin, it breeds in our very natures, and that's the reason it grows up so fast in us, *terra spinarum mater frumenti noverca*; let ground lye fallow, you shall have a greater crop of thorns, than with all your labour of corn, so it is with the heart; nay there be many, that will be hardly perswaded, that this is any sin at all, but reprove them for it, O they will
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will say it is my nature, I cannot help it, nay sinner know that 'tis thine Iniquity, and that which if it abide still in thee will ruin thee. This is the first piece of policy, sin it works altogether with our natural inclinations, and that makes us so willing and ready to embrace it, and so loath to part with it.

2. Sin speaks us very fair at first, as if it came to us to be our servant, only, and to do us good, and by this trick it gets into our hearts; this is a great piece of policy, *1 Kings 12. 6, 7.* so doth sin come to us at the first with sugured words, with golden promises, with the fairest pretences that can be. O saith sin, if you will but entertain me, I will make you happy, you shall live after a better rate then ever you have done. Thus *Solomon* describeth sin to us by an Harlot, *7. Prov. 15, 16, 17. v.* what is the event of it, read the *21, 22. v.* be sure sin will never loose any thing for want of good words, a thousand fair pretences will it make to get into our hearts.

3. Sin will bribe the senses to get into the heart, this was the first piece of policy, that the Devil used to make *Eve* sin,
3. Gen.

3. *Gen. 6.* and as he prevailed over the first *Adam* with this, so he thought to have overcome the second *Adam* likewise, by the very same policy, 4. *Mat. 8, 9.* certainly the Devil made the World to look very beautiful to the eye, that the glorious view of it might have inticed our Saviour, so sin that gets in either by the calements of the eyes, or by the gates of the lips, or the back doors of the ears, or through the sink of the throat, by one sense or another that is bribed or corrupted by sin, and we in the mean time to please our senses entertain sin in our hearts; this is another great policy and mystery of sin; like cunning suiters when they go a wooing, give largely to the Maids, that so they may get the Mistres, so sin pleaseth the senses, that it may gain the heart; the Saints of old, they knew well and found out this Mystery of sin, and therefore they stopt its passage, 31. *Job. 1.* So *David* was as careful of his mouth, as *Job* of his eyes, therefore he prays thus, 141. *Pf. 3.* and the Reason of it, he gives in the 4. v. O saith *David*, sin often creeps in at the mouth, and so gets into the heart; sinners dainties often makes us to think daintily of sin. O how few

few are their that do take notice of this Mystery of sins policy, but prostitute their eyes, their ears, their mouths to the allurements of sin, and so at last come to give their hearts to sin. O remember that *Eve* looked on the Apple, and sin got into her heart, *Solomon* he hearkned to his Wives, and Idolatry crept into his heart, the Drunkard he tastes of the Wine, the lascivious wanton doth but touch the Harlot, and both are drawn into sin. *Solomon* hath a strange exhortation, in the 23. *Pro.* 31. why is it such a matter to look on it, yes, read v. 32. and he sheweth how soon sin gets through the eyes into the heart in the 33. verse.

4. This sin will pretend a reformation that so it may get into the heart. O here is the very marrow of Devilish policy, this was *Jehu's* policy to get into the Throne of *Israel*, he pretended that he would pull down Idolatry, and yet he was still as great an Idolater as any. Mark him in all his passages, 2 *Kings* 10. 16, 26, 27, 28, 29. v. so this sin comes like a *Jehu*, drives on furiously, will do strange things, thou must leave such and such idle courses, as Covetousness will not let men be Drunkards.

ards, Whoremongers, Prodigal, Proud in their Apparel; so Hypocrisie will not let men be Swearers, or Proud, or intemperate; and thus poor silly men are deceived by sin, and take this for a reformation, *2 Kings* 5. 17, 18. so saith the sinner, if God would but pardon me this one sin, I will never be guilty of other sins; why don't you know, that 'tis for no good to your Souls, that this your sin will not suffer other sins in you? Did you never hear that sins will quarrel among themselves? *Herod* and *Pilate* were enemies one to another, yet neither of them friends to Christ. This one sin though thou cast out all others, will be enough to damn thy Soul; and therefore have a care of it when it puts on an holy dress; if you be never better reformed than sin can reform you, you may be damned for all such a reformation, *2 Cor.* 11. 14, 15. sin is one of the Devils Ministers, his Servants that doth exactly follow his steps for to deceive us.

5. Sin endeavours to work God out of the heart, that so it may work into the heart, fills a man's thoughts with prejudices against God, and seeks wonderfully
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to discredit God. This was the first piece of the Devils policy, 3. *Gen.* 1. as much as if the Devil had said, what is this your God that you make so much of, and will he not let you eat an Apple? what mean you to obey such a God, as will be so strict with you for such small and petty trifles? so sin fills the heart with hard thoughts of God, 25. *Mat.* 24, 25. And this is the great argument that sin puts into the mouths of wicked Persons, do but hear what they say, 3. *Mal.* 14, 15. O say they, what a madness is it to be the Servant of God, a sinner fares better and lives merrier, and is far more happy than a Saint, sin perswades the Soul that God is hardest to his best Servants. O Brethren, take notice of this, this is wonderful and deep policy, and many thousand Souls have perished by this deceit. This is the common course of the World, that he that will give most shall be Master. Thus sin brings the Soul out of dislike of God and his Government, and wrests God out of his own Throne, and gets into the Throne it self. This was the policy whereby *Ab-salom* won the Kingdom away from *David* his Father, 2 *Sam.* 15: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. vers. Thus

Thus sin by this very kind of policy, wins away mens hearts from God; as wicked Persons intice Servants from their Masters, by telling them that they are hard Masters, so do sin intice away the heart from God.

6. Sin will always out-bid God in his promises, doth God promise to make us happy hereafter; sin will promise to make us happy both here and hereafter too, sin will perswade us, that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; sin like the Devil is very large in its promises, and mark the policy, it promiseth always those things, that are most suitable to our corrupt natures; like Fishermen, that put on such baits on their hooks, that the fish likes best, 1. *Prov.* 10, 11. mark the promise v. 13. so in our Saviours Temptation. 4. *Mat.* 8, 9. what no less than the whole World? Brethren, the Devil and sin if you will but listen to them, will tell you of strange things, will promise you whatever you can desire of them, you shall have all things as you list, you shall never want. O how many are there in the World, that prefer sin before God upon this account, because the Promises of sin are far greater,

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as to the things of this World, and such things as will best please carnal hearts than the promises of God, and the reason is this, because sin promiseth more than ever it can perform, but God promiseth no more than he will perform, and therefore upon this very account have we that caveat of the Apostle in 3. *Heb.* 13. Now sin is never more deceitful than in its promises; O, therefore have a care of trusting to what sin promiseth; you shall see what you shall get by taking sins word, in the 7 *Prov.* 15. ^{to} 18. well what follows ver. 21. ^{to} 23. 7. Sin will urge us very much with the common practice of most men; that the generality of men do so and so, and will charge us with singularity if we yield not to it, hereby it deceives many a Soul. As the *Danites* inticed away *Micha's* Priests from him with this policy, 18. *Judg.* 19, 20. So saith sin, what wilt thou be alone by thy self, come with us we are many. As the Devil told Christ, my name is Legion, for we are many, so many sinners say we are Legion, we are many, sinners have the major part, the stronger part, and the highest part of the World.

First. The major part, 7. *Mat.* 13, 14.

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verses.

verses. O this takes with many, they love not to be singular they love to do as others do; secondly, the stronger part, 10. *Luk.* 3. the Wolves are the strongest side; there was only one *Elijah* a poor persecuted Prophet on the Lords side, as you may read, 1 *Kings* 18. 22. when *Baal* had four hundred and above. And all those men of the times, they had not only the major but the stronger part; O this is a deceit to many a poor Soul, that loves to swim down with the stream of the times. Thirdly, the highest part of the World, the great and mighty, and noble 7. *John* 48. have any of the Rulers of the World believed on him? O there are few else, but the poorer and meaner sort that close with Christ, O this encourageth many to sin, that they may joyn with the better sort as they call them, men of fashion, and quality, and estate in the World. O Brethren, take heed of this snare, many a poor Soul is insnared by it; look not who are the Persons that sin, but look what sin is; sin is not the less dangerous to our Souls, because of the multitudes that do embrace it, did *Sodom* fare ever the better, because they were all sinners except *Lot*; which
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of you will drink a cup of poyson, because you see many are killed by it, O then why will you entertain sin, because you see others and many, may multitudes that are damned by it.

8. Sins policy in getting into the heart, is its modesty at first, it seems to blush at great sins and to abhor them, O but saith sin, such or such a sin thou mayest commit, that's but a small matter. Thus sin inticeth many first to their Faith and Troth, and then to common gross swearing. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*, sin gets up by degrees, 1 Cor. 15. 33. be not deceived *i.e.* O Christians, look upon this as the great policy and deceit of sin, when it begins at first only with wicked words, and thence it will proceed to wicked works, 1 Cor. 5. 6. O Brethren, remember that stinking weeds grow fastest, and if you make but room for the Devil to get in his claw, he will soon get in his whole paw; if you begin but with a small sin, you will hardly end without greater sins. O Brethren, if sin ask you or would compel you to go with it but one mile, go not, for you will hardly leave it before you have gone twain.

9. Sin hath another policy to work into the heart, and that is by urging to moderation. O how many amongst us are perverted themselves, by perverting that Text in the 7. *Ecc. 16.* what is the general voice and cry among us, truly we love not to be precise, there be many are more scrupulous than they need to be. Brethren, in some things 'tis granted that a man may be righteous overmuch, that is in placing their Religion and devotion, in that which God never commanded: But in the duties of the Gospel, we can never be too righteous, we can never love God or hate sin, we can never fear God or be afraid of sin too much; see what the Gospel commands 5. *Eph. 15.* ἀνεστῆς, ὡς ἀνέστης βαίνειν, we must walk up to the very top of our Religion and Profession, and mark what our Saviour saith in the 5. *Mat. 20.* and they were the most precise Persons in all the World, and yet we must exceed them, and read but the verse before, verse the 19. there you see the very least command is to be of great concernment with us.

10. Sin is very importunate, it will take no denial at our hands. O this is a winning way, it wearieth us out from day
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to day, that we must either grant what she would have, or else never be quiet. This hath betrayed many Souls, this is old policy, as in *Dalilah*, 16. *Judg.* 16, 17. this is a mighty prevailing way, as 18. *Luk.* 23, 4, 5. verses. O Brethren, this is the policy of sin and the Devil, to weary out our hearts with continual Temptations; therefore the Devil is called *Beelzebub*, which word signifyeth the Prince of the flies or gnats, look as gnats, beat them off, and they will fly on you again, an 100, or 1000 times, so will the Devil and Sin, when sin once begins to tempt, it will hardly give over till it hath prevailed; and therefore the best remedy is to resist the very first Motions of it, and if it come again, be sure that you be prepared for it again and again, do as the *Romans* did, if you would conquer sin as they did the World. *Nunquam vincebant sed crastina bella timebant.*

11. Sin oftentimes gets into a man's heart insensibly, it slips in before he is aware of it; many a man commits a sin when he doth not intend to do so. O Brethren, here is a very great deceit; and when once 'tis got in, then it is hard to get it

out again: The reason of this is, because men do not keep a spiritual watch over their hearts as they ought to do, they are carnally secure. *Peter*, he little thought of denying Christ, when he entered into the High Priests Palace. *David* little thought of committing murder and adultery, when he was walking upon the top of his house. *Hazael* little thought of his being so cruel a murderer before he was a King; is thy servant a dead dog to do so? O Brethren, sin it draws us insensibly many times into the Temptation and Snare, before we are aware of it; and therefore let us always mind that of the Apostle in the first of the *Thes.* 5. 3, 6. sin hath many a by-trap-door to get in at, which we know not of, O therefore, we had need be the more careful and fearful of our selves.

12. Sin hath another policy to get into the heart, and that is by telling us much of the mercy of God, and of the power of Repentance, that when the worst comes to the worst, yet we may repent and God hath then promised pardon. O Brethren, this is a great deceit, and that which hath
carried

carried thousands of Souls to Hell, and therefore consider two or three things.

1. What a folly is it, if a man be but himself rightly to consider of it, for a man to sin purposely that he may repent; there is none but a fool will break his leg willingly, because there is a good bone setter in the same Town.

2. Do you know what Repentance is, if you did, you would never make work for Repentance; true Repentance is a ~~great~~ work that is most tiresome to flesh and blood; the pleasure of sin will never half countervail the pains of true Repentance; as a man that drinks himself into a fever, the bitter potions and the rending tearing purges he takes, do far exceed the pleasure of the Wine he drank, ask *Peter*, *Minassah*, and *Mary Magdalen* what Repentance is, and you will never sin, that so you may Repent.

3. 'Tis abominable wickedness to sin on this account, because God is merciful in pardoning sin. Nay, O sinner, whoever thou art that committest any sin upon this score, I dare say it unto thee for a truth that that sin shall never be pardoned, take

heed of tempting the Lord, and abusing mercy in this manner.

4. Though God hath promised pardon to those that repent, yet God never yet promised Repentance to willful sinners ; know this, that Repentance 'tis Gods gift, and 'tis not in any man's power to repent when he will, and therefore if thou sin that so thou mayest repent hereafter for it, know this, that 'tis a very great hazard whether ever thou shalt repent or no. Mark that place the Apostle puts a peradventure to it, *2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.* here you see is no more than a peradventure, O then do not hazard your Souls at peradventures. I will only add this one word more, if it be a peradventure, whether ever God will give such Persons Repentance, 'tis a greater peradventure, that they shall never repent, than that they shall repent.

Thus you see the great Mystery of sin in working into the heart, O how many ways hath sin to get into us, 'tis our wisdom and policy, to learn the policy and mystery of sin in this regard, this will help us much to the keeping of it out of our hearts ; when we know all its by-passages
and

and secret trap-doors, and false pretences, and deceitful Arguments to get into our hearts, we may then be the better able to shut it out.

Instead of the application of this truth, I will commend two ways to you to keep out this sin from working into your hearts.

The first is to study more, and endeavour to learn all its plots and policies; I say all for sin hath several Keys to unlock our hearts, if we prevent it in one design, it presently makes use of another. Now how to compass this, there are these two directions.

1. Study much the Scriptures, the word of God that will discover all sins, plots and policies to us, the Scripture will do as much for us, as the Prophet *Elisba* for the King of *Israel*, 2 *Kings* 6. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. v. so the word of God will discover all sins policy. Doth sin consult to catch us at our pleasures, the Scripture sends us word of it, 21 *Luk.* 34. Doth sin think to give us a fall in our holy duties, the Scripture sends us word of that, 5. *Ecc.* 1. Doth sin think to catch us with small baits, I mean by tempting to small sins, the Scripture

pture sends us word of that, 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. Doth sin think to steal away our hearts, the Scripture sends us word of it, 4. *Prov.* 23. in the word of God you shall find all disclosed. Do to sin when the Scripture hath discovered it to you, as you read at the 21 v. the King of *Israel* would have done to the *Syrians*, when the Prophet *Elisha* discovered their plots to him; he was presently for smiting of them, but that the Prophet *Elisha* forbid him, as you may read in the 22 v. of that 6 Chap. of the 2 Book of the Kings.

2. Be much in Prayer, begging the spirit of God, 5. *Gal.* 16. This is the way to keep sin out, by letting the spirit of God into our hearts; the spirit of God (as one speaks) is an Heavenly Antidote against the Poyson and Infection of Sin, 8. *Rom.* 2.

Secondly, labour to counterplot sin, be you as wise and subtle to keep sin out, as sin is wise and subtle to get in. To this end, use these Scripture stratagems. The first is that of *Solomon*, 23. *Prov.* 17. here is sins plot, by shewing us the prosperity of sinners, the counterplot, be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long, see the 8. *Prov.* 13. and 14. *Prov.* 27.

2ly. That of the Apostle 6. *Eph.* 13. 'tis sad for a naked man to meet with an armed Enemy, keep on your Armour.

3ly. That of our Saviour in 13. *Matk* 37. though a man be armed, yet if asleep, the enemy hath advantage; the Devil and sin gets most when we sleep, 13. *Mat.* 24, 25.

4ly. Avoid all occasions of sin, 4. *Prov.* 14, 15. 5. *Prov.* 8. 23. *Prov.* 20. and 31. verses.

5ly. Make the chief end of your life the glory of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. be exact in following this Rule, and sin will never snap you.

2. The mystery of this sin working in the heart, and here is no less policy than in the former, you shall see abundance of subtilty, and variety of stratagemis, that sin useth to keep in the heart when once it is gotten in. This sin I told you before is like an Usurper or Tyrant, when once 'tis gotten into the Throne, 'twill use all the subtilty and policy imaginable to keep there, 'twill be an hard matter to get rid of it.

Now some of its policy lyes in these particulars.

1. It

1. It will endeavour all that it can to win upon the heart. The first thing a Tyrant doth when he is got to the Throne, is to win the hearts of his Subjects if he can, so do sin, *1 Kings 11. 4.* *Solomons* Wives when they had got his heart, they might do any thing with him, they could then perswade him to any thing. As a man that hath won another man's heart, O he can deny that man nothing, *14. Mat. 6, 7.* O *Herodias* daughter had quite won his heart, her dancing pleased him so well, and therefore she might have of him what she would ask; so sin quite wins some mens hearts, that they are altogether for it, they will not deny it any thing. As we say of some Servants, they have quite won their Masters heart for ever, he will never part with them, so such Persons will hardly ever part with their sins, speak against these sins, or Preach against these sins, you quite strike them to the heart. O Brethren, take heed of this when sin in your hearts once comes to get your hearts, then 'tis like to keep possession; God must work a very great Miracle, some wonderful change to part you and that sin.

2. When

2. When sin is got into the heart, that so it may keep possession, it begins to build and raise forts and bulwarks to keep out all its enemies. As *Rehoboams* policy to confirm his Kingdom; the first thing that he did after he came to be King, was building Cities and fortifying the strong holds, as you read in the 2 *Chron.* 11. c. 5, 11, 12. v. so sin fortifies it self in the heart, when once it hath got possession there; therefore we read in Scripture of the strong holds of sin, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. the word *ἰχυρία* signifieth Forts, Towers, or Castles, places that are kept strong and fortified against all enemies and opposition whatever.

Thus sin when it is got into the heart, it presently raiseth forts, and bulwarks, and rampiers, builds Castles, lays in ammunition against a Siege.

Will you see the particulars.

1. Sin hath its Forts, Castles and strong Holds.

1. A blind mind is one of sins strong Holds; sin strives to make the Soul as dark as any Dungeon, and keeps the Soul what it can from seeing any light. Thus the Apostle tells us of this strong Hold, 4. *Eph.*

18. As

18. As long as sin can keep the Soul in this posture, 'tis sure of it. O Brethren, this is such a strong Fort, that all the Batteries of the Scripture cannot overthrow it. Men that are resolved to be ignorant, and delight in their ignorance (as too many do) O how hard a matter it is to convert such Persons. Now sin raiseth this Fort in the Soul these three ways.

1. It keeps the Soul ignorant of Christ and the ways of Christ, it will not let the Soul see the excellency of these things, which are enough to ravish the Soul. Hence they cry out, *5. Cant. 9.* and again *3. Mal. 14.* when the Soul is thus 'tis far from conversion; there is no talking to such Persons of Christ and Grace, no perswading of such Persons to Holiness; they love not to hear of these things, because they know not the excellency of them.

2. It keeps the Soul ignorant of sin, as to the nature and danger of it. O you shall hear People cry out, what harm is there in telling a Lye, in swearing an Oath, in drinking a merry Cup now and then, in taking a little pleasure, *1 Sam. 14. 43.* So say sinners, what must I be presently damned for every small sin, I did but do so and
fo,

so, and must I dye for it. Thus ignorant People will do all that they can to excuse and to extenuate and lessen their sins, because they are ignorant of the nature and danger of them; some will say, they see no reason why Ministers should keep such a stir about such petty trifling businesses, O 'tis a sign sin hath got strong Hold in their Souls.

3. It keeps the Soul ignorant of its estate and condition, it cries peace, peace, when God speaks no peace; Heaven frowns on them, and the Scriptures denounce nothing but Wrath and Judgment against them, 29. *Deut.* 13. O tell a sinner of such and such sins, O they will say they hope to be saved for all that; poor blind Souls, how doth sin lead them blindfold to Hell. O Brethren, this is a strong Fort, and 'tis hard to storm it, we may Preach and God may send his judgments on the earth, and all to no purpose, for they will not learn righteousness; O take heed of this; endeavour all that you can to learn while you have the means of grace continued to you; take pains for knowledge, for while sin keeps you in blindness, it keeps a strong Hold in you.

z. Ano-

2. Another strong Fort or Castle, that sin raiseth up in the Soul, is hardness of heart; hence it is called in Scripture, an heart of stone, or a stony heart, *11. Ezek. 19.* we account Castles that are built with Free-stone, and on Rocks, the strongest Castles. O, sin makes it self strong, when it makes it self a Fort, and a Castle of stone in the heart. Oh! how hard is it to get sin out of such an heart, 'tis like a stone hardned in sin; lay a Mountain upon a stone (saith a late Divine) and it never groans, so is it with sinners, let a Mountain of sin, a World of guilt lye upon his Soul, he feels it not, he groans not under it; smite a stone while you will, beat it as long as you can stand over it, it complains not; Oh, reprove sinners, beat them with the hammer of the word of God, they are not moved at all, they complain never the more of sin, read *6. Hosea 5.* God hews sinners by the Preaching of the word as a Mason doth hew stones and cut them, yet are they stones still *v. 7.* A stone will not bend nor bow, break it you may, but bend it you cannot; so sinners, let them hear the best Sermons, sit under the most powerful Preaching and pathetical persuasions,

suasions, they are like stones still, God may break them to pieces with the stroaks and blows of his Judgments, yet every piece remains a stone still. Oh hard and rocky hearts! how hath sin fortified it self to the purpose in these hearts; when their hearts are so hard, that they are Sermon-proof, ^{and} Ordinance-proof, and Judgment-proof, what shall we then say of their Salvation.

3. Another Castle, Fort, or strong Hold, sin erects in the Soul, that it may keep the possession, is a seared Conscience, 1 Tim. 4. 2. Oh, this is an invincible Castle, 4. Eph. 19. When a man is not sensible of his vileness, is not ashamed of sin, but rather boasts and glories in it, this is *limen inferni*, the very threshold of Hell. Reproof's like pistol bullets, will not enter such coats of mail as these; what will they say? tell us of Sin and Hell and Damnation? we care not a rush for these things. Oh Brethren, have a care of letting sin get such a power in your hearts, as to raise up such an invincible Fort as this is, that all the Sermons in the World, all reproofs and persuasions in the World, all the mercies and judgments of God should do you no good.

I

Oh

Oh, when men come to be once past feeling, then do they work all uncleanness with greediness, then do they make hast to damnation, and gallop full speed to Hell; as the hard heart is a Castle of stone, this is a wall of brass, *sic murus aeneus esto, nil conscire tibi nullâ pallefcere culpâ.*

Thus I have shewed you the strong Holds of sin, the Forts and Castles *τὰ ὀχυρώματα* its strong Fortifications. Now,

2. I will shew you some of its Artillery or Ammunition, that it Fortifies these Castles withal; for the strongest Castle or Garrison, must yield at last for want of Ammunition; sin doth furnish the Soul herein. As,

1. With carnal affections and desires, these are like match, take fire with the least spark; blow but the coal of temptations over them, and they are presently all in a flame, 8. *Rom.* 6. Oh, take heed of all carnal affections, they are the Ammunition sin lays into the Soul.

2. With sinful and wicked Arguments to plead for sin. Oh, how are sinners furnished with these Hellish Arguments, these are sins Ammunition also: Oh what eloquent Tertulluses, are many sinners to plead

plead for their sins ; as some will plead for Drunkenness, oh they must not be base, they must keep Gentlemen company and spend their money ; others for Covetousness, the times are hard, they have great Families, they must be sparing ; others plead for sin, because *Noah*, *David*, and *Peter* committed the like sins. Oh Brethren, sin will furnish you with a Thousand Arguments against your Souls, these are like shields and bucklers to keep off the reproofs of the word.

3. With prejudices against the People of God, and the ways of God : Oh say some, these Saints are the basest fellows in the World, as *Ahab* said of *Michaiah*, I hate him, I can't endure him : Oh, these are like Granadoes that carry wild-fire in them, these are furious like *Saul*, and breath out threatnings against the People of God, and this makes them to hate the ways of God. Brethren, take heed of prejudices against the People of God, Oh this is sins Ammunition in the heart, when it cannot bring a man out of dislike with Religion, then it sets him to hate the Professors of Religion. Oh take heed of harbouring ill thoughts of the Servants of

Christ. This very thing, have brought many sober Persons to debauchery and wickedness, because of their hatred to the Godly, and hath brought many to forsake Religion, because they have a prejudice against such as profess Religion.

4. With many curious and pleasant fantasies of the pleasures, happiness, and delights, that there are in sin; these fantasies sin lays into the heart before-hand, as so many Barrels of Gun-powder, that it may be ready stockt against the temptation comes, and then with every little spark of temptation, sin is ready to blow up the Soul at once. Oh take heed of entertaining any good thoughts of sin. It was a sure sign, that *Jonathan* loved *David* well, and was loath to part with *David*, because when ever *Saul* spake of Killing *David*, he would be speaking well of him and pleading for him; so Brethren, 'tis a sure sign you love sin well, and are loath to part with your sins, when ever Ministers or others, are speaking to you of slaying it, you will think well of it, and be still pleading for it. And thus you see a second piece of policy in sin, to keep possession of the heart, when once it is got in, by raising

ing strong Holds in the Soul, and furnishing it with such abundance of ammunition, that 'tis hard to get it out.

3. Sin hath another policy to keep possession, by bolting and barring up all the doors, and stopping all passages, when^{ce} it perceives any will endeavour to get it out, sin will keep a man from good company what it can, will not let a man sit under the powerful Preaching of the word, will stop the ears to all reproofs and good admonitions. This was the policy of *Ama- ziah Jeroboams* Idolatrous Priest, he would suffer no good Preaching at *Bethel*, for fear his Idols should go down, 7. *Amos* 12, 13. Sin doth not love, that there should be any correspondence kept between Christ and the Soul, it intercepts all letters and messages from Christ to the Soul, and from the Soul to Christ; will keep the Soul from praying, reading, hearing, that so it may keep the Soul from Christ. Oh Brethren, this is great policy: I have read *William* the Conqueror's policy to gain *England* was this, as soon as he had landed all his men here, he presently burnt all the Ships that brought them over, that so none might return back, but they must fight

it out. When sin hath drawn away the heart from God and Christ into evil ways and courses, then it hinders it from all ways and means of returning to Christ: Hence sinners cry down Preaching, cry down Sabbaths, cry down Ordinances, cry down Prayers in Families; because sin knows if these go up, it must come down; sin bars the doors of the heart against any thing that should bring in Christ; this is desperate policy, 29. *Prov.* 1.

4. Another policy of sin to keep possession, is to be always very pleasing and observant to the heart, always delighting of it with its pleasures; the sinner would quickly grow weary of that wicked course and trade, did not sin dayly supply him with new pleasures and delights. This policy of sin, the Scripture takes much notice of in divers places, take two or three 4. *Hosea* 11. when the Soul hath full sails of pleasures, and a full tide of earthly delights, Oh how merrily doth it swim down the stream to Hell. To this purpose is that of *Solomon*, 5. *Prov.* 20. by the strange Woman, and the bosom of a stranger, he means all the pleasures and delights of sin, now he gives us the Reason why we

we should not embrace these, v. 22. these are the cords of sin to bind us fast, this is sin's policy to keep the possession of our hearts, sin cares not what it spend upon us, that so we may still entertain it; therefore again saith *Solomon*, 7. *Eccl.* 4. a wise man that is afraid of sin, will keep from this house of mirth. Oh Brethren, sin keeps a merry a jovial house, to please and delight the sinner, and by this stratagem keeps the possession of his heart; therefore *Solomon* calls these pleasures the song of fools v. 5. Oh how merrily doth sin carry poor Souls to Hell; alafs they sing, but they know not whether they are going, 22. *If*, 12, 13, 14. hardly do such Persons get rid of sin, ~~and~~ chain of pleasures will keep any man fast. Oh when sinners once begin to be serious, and to think of their Souls and Salvation, then sin begins to make them merry, to put away all such thoughts out of their minds. I have read in the story of the Life of King *Edward* the sixth, that the Lords that had contrived the Death of the Duke of *Somerſet*, Uncle to the King, and Lord Protector; after he was condemned, their policy to keep the King from being troubled at his Death,

and that he might not pardon him, was to entertain the King every day at Feasts and Banquets, and with new Plays, Masks and Sports, which they thought pleased the King best; just such is the policy of sin to ruin our Souls, by entertaining of us with the vain pleasures and delights of this World, to keep out of our hearts the care of our Souls, the hatred of sin, and the thoughts of Death and Eternity.

Thus sin hath formerly played its pranks with the old World, and will use the same policy to destroy this World too, 24. *Mat.* 37, 38, 39. Oh Brethren, let us take notice of this policy of sin, we live in the last days of the World, upon the very edges or banks of Eternity, Oh let us have a care of these pleasures, whereby sin will draw away our hearts from God to our Eternal ruin.

5. Sin hath another policy to keep possession, when once 'tis got into the heart, it keeps the heart abroad as much as it can, I mean thus, it sets the heart a work, and busie abroad in looking after other mens sins. Thus sin deals just like an Harlot, that sends her Husband from home, while she may entertain her Adulterer with her,
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so sin will make us busie in judging other mens hearts, and prying into and looking over other mens lives and actions, that so we may have no time to look into our own hearts, lives, and actions. Thus the *Pharisees* of old, all their trouble was for others, because they were sinners, but never considered their own sins. And I pray, what are we now a days? are not we the same, we are all jury men in other mens cases and actions, we can tell when others do amiss, but cannot tell when we our selves do amiss; oh this is deep policy, and 'tis that mystery that is now at work among us, even amongst the greatest Professors. In all companies they are asking of others, and talking of others. what such and such have done; you shall hear few or none complaining of themselves, of their own hearts, of their own lives; oh Brethren, we give sin the greatest advantage that can be, while we are rifling and spending our verdicts on other mens hearts; you shall see an example of this in the 12. *John* 3, 4, 5. v. *Judas* would fain be spying a fault in others, but considered not the desperate wickedness of his own heart. Our Saviour reproveth all

while we are thus abroad to keep possession at home to play its pranks in our owne hearts
such

such reprovers as these are, in 7. *Mat.* 3, 4, 5. v. This is like some Persons, that at their Neighbours houses will be spying out a fluttish trick and telling of it, but regard not any fluttishness or nastiness at home; oh Brethren, we our selves are in the greatest fault, when we can see no fault in our selves. O take notice of this policy of sin, 'tis only sin that makes men so censorious of others. Christ in his Gospel, bids you not to censure others, look to your selves, if you see any thing amiss in another, search whether there is not the like in you; say thus, oh am not I guilty of the same sin my self? have not I as wicked an heart my self? Brethren, always observe it, a censorious heart, is a wicked heart; 'tis some sin or other, that would fain be ruler in our hearts, that sends us abroad so often; oh let us leave off this trick of censuring others, and look to our own sins, set our own hearts in order, we do all complain of sins in the Nation, that bring judgments upon us, but have not we some of those sins in us? do not we harbour some of those caterpillars, that devour our Land in our hearts; 'tis worth every man's diligent search and inquiry;

quity ; sin deals with us in this case, like thieves that cry out fire, fire, and so call People abroad, and then they get in and rifle their houses. O Brethren, the best of men, they have been the most tender of others, and most sharp and severe against themselves, 2 *Sam.* 24. 17. 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. these were better acquainted with their own hearts, than many of our proud censuring Saints now a days. O Brethren, do but try this way, and see if you do not get advantage against your own sin. Be as diligent in spying out your own sin, as you have been formerly in spying out sins in others, and talk more bitterly against your own sins than formerly you have done against other mens sins.

6. This sin will keep very close in the heart, that so others shall not take notice of it. This is another of sins policies to keep possession ; for sin knows our tempers very well, sin knows we are all Hypocrites by nature, and love to make a fair shew outwardly before men, but care not how we are in the sight of God ; sin knows this, and therefore 'twill teach us an hundred cunning ways, how we may keep it secret from the eye of man ; how
cun-

cunningly and closely did *Judas* conceal and keep in his sin, none of the other Disciples took the least notice of him, no not when he was ready to do the Fact, as you may read 13. *John* 27, 28. oh this is the bargain, that most of us make with our own sins, we will give them room in our hearts and entertainment, so long as they will keep secret, and no man knows of them, but if they once come to be discovered, then we can keep them no longer; oh how hath this very thing ruined many Souls, we think all is well as long as we can but keep the matter secret and private from men; oh Brethren, the way for us to get rid of our own sins, is to shame our selves for them before men, 5. *James* 16. you will tell all the diseases of your body to your Physician, you will tell all the flaws in your Evidences, for your Estate to your Counsellor or Attorney; why, if you love your Souls, keep not sins counsel, out with it to some Godly bosom intimate Friend, get some such to help you out with it by his good counsels, or by his fervent prayers; sin will speak to us as *Sisera* to *Jael*, *Judg.* 4. 20. so when Ministers come to reprove sin, such or such a sin, and

and to put men upon examining their own hearts; whether they have not such or such sins in them, oh then will sin whisper the Soul, do not say that I am here, oh do not say that I am here. Thus many keep sins counsel to their own ruin; take heed of this policy.

7. Another policy is this, when sin sees that a man being convinced by the light of the word, goes about to turn it out of doors, then to keep possession, 'twill persuade the Soul thus, that 'tis an impossible thing for a man to be wholly freed from every sin in this life, and therefore what need he trouble himself about one sin, as long as he can keep himself from other sins. This was that which deceived the *Pharisee*, God I thank thee I am not as other men, nor as this Publican, he thought it well enough, that he was free from the grosser sins; so I have heard many say when reprov'd for sin; and who I pray you is free from one sin or other. As if God had given every man a patent to keep one sin in his heart, so he kept no more. Brethren, take notice of it, sin plays the sophister with you here; and I will shew you the fallacy of this Argument;

ment; 'tis true every man hath sin in him while he is in this life, but it doth not from hence follow, that every man doth keep, allow, and maintain sin in his heart. A true Saint doth all that he can to be rid of every sin, though he cannot be rid of it; He is as careful to avoid sin, as a Traveller is to avoid a Thief, though he may fall into the hands of Thieves for all that. 'Tis sins policy to be alway beleaguering of us, and besetting of us round about, but 'tis our duty to be always watchful against it, and to do our utmost, to turn it out of doors. 'Tis not the bare having of sin, but the owning of any one sin, the loving it, the obeying it, the maintaining of it, that will damn a man. And therefore in a Gospel sense, a man may be perfect in this life and free from every sin, *i.e.* from the countenancing of sin, 1 John 3. 7, 8, 9. Learn rightly to understand this Text. Bernard gives us a threefold exposition of it.

1. He doth not commit sin. *Non peccatum facit, quod patitur potius quam facit.* Sin is sometimes too hard for him, and so he is rather made to sin than to make sin; like a Prisoner taken by the *Turks*, he is made

made a slave in the Gallies, 'tis true he rows the boat but 'tis against his will, 'tis ^{so a saint} his punishment grief and trouble, ^{sin but tis} but a wicked man he sins, and 'tis his pleasure ^{much a} and delight to do so. A chaste Virgin may be caught by a man and ravisht or deflowered, oh but 'tis as Death to her, but a common Whore, she seeks after men 'tis her pleasure to play the Whore. ^{against his will}

2. *Non peccat, id est, non permanet in peccato*; sinners like swine, they go to the mire on purpose to lye down and tumble in it, a Saint if he fall into the dirt, he presently makes hast home and washeth himself, and rubs his cloaths and makes himself clean. As soon as *Peter* had sinned grievously, he presently falls to weeping bitterly. A wicked man lives in sin as a fish in the water, 'tis his element, yea he cannot live without sin.

3. *Non peccat, id est, tantundem est ac si non peccet, pro eo scilicet quod non imputatur ei peccatum*. Now God will not impute sin to a regenerate man, why so? because 'tis not the regenerate man that sins, but the unregenerate part in him that's only guilty of the sin, 7. *Rom. 15, 17.* I sin saith the Apostle, yet I hate it when

when I do commit it, 'tis not my will to do so but my weakness. O Brethren, learn these things, and see the policy of sin how you must avoid it, thrust it from you, out with it, hate it, abhor it, do not hearken to it, and if any time you fall into any sin let it be your grief and sorrow for it; oh do not countenance sin, because you cannot be wholly rid of sin. Learn this Gospel perfection, not to sin at all, *i.e.* not to delight in sin, own it, not for your act and deed, continue not in it, nor suffer it to continue in you.

8. Another policy of sin to keep possession, is to tell you of the examples of the Saints, every one of them had their sins, and yet they went to Heaven for all that, and why may not you keep a sin as well as any of them, and yet go to Heaven at last. Thus it will tell you of *Noah's Drunkenness*, of *Lots Incest*, of *Josephs Swearing*, of *Dauids Murder and Adultery*, of *Peters Denial of Christ*, &c. O Brethren, this we may call sins Charter, whereby it holds fast possession of many Souls. This very argument hath made many to keep their sins all their lives, and to carry them to their graves with them, only in hope to find

find mercy with God, because such and such did notwithstanding their sins.

Now to unhamper this snare, consider,

1. That these Saints, though they did commit those sins, yet we cannot call them their own sins as in the Text, they were not beloved sins, sins that they took delight in, they did not continue in those sins, neither did they give those sins room and possession in their hearts; but now if you keep sin in you, why yours and theirs are not alike.

2. 'Tis as vain a thing for a man to make this an argument to live in sin, because others *viz.* the Saints have fallen into a sin now and then, and obtained mercy, as for me to drink a cup of rank poyson, because I have heard of one that hath drunk a cup and it did not kill him; take heed of tempting God, because I have seen men dance on ropes, shall I therefore that have no skill venture to do the like? because I have read, that *Jonas* saved his life in the Sea in a Whales belly, shall I therefore leap into the Sea, or into a Whales mouth? because God had mercy on some, shall I therefore desperately run into the very jaws of fury and vengeance.

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3. Quid

Qui sequantur exorantem sequere penitentem, if we would follow the examples of the Saints, why then we must cast away sin, we must turn sin out of doors. None of the Saints in all the Bible suffered sin to keep possession, if you would find mercy as they did, follow their Repentance.

4. This is no proper way to hope for mercy at death, by continuing in sin all our lives; if we do not put away sin now we are alive, do you think God will take away sin from us when we are dead, nay rather the contrary, if we suffer sin to live with us, will not God suffer sin to dye with us, 8. *John* 24. O will not Christ say at the day of Judgment, to such as will not in this life part with sin, and yet cry for mercy then. O, sin and you have been old companions, you have lived a long time together, 'tis pity to part you now, and therefore sin and you shall to Hell together; if we keep sin for our Tenant on Earth, 'tis pity but we should be Tenants to sin in Hell.

5. Consider with what difficulty those Saints got pardon; O they were fain to pray, and cry, and roar, and weep bitterly

ly before they could be healed; now consider if these so hardly escaped, that did but give sin a nights lodging, or an hours baiting as we may so speak, O how do you think you shall escape, or get pardon, or find mercy at last, that have farmed out your Souls to sin, for the whole term of your lives; read that of the Apostle, and I say no more, *1st Pet. 4. 18. 9.* sin hath ⁹ another policy yet to keep possession, and that is, by keeping the Soul formal in holy duties, by making the Soul to rest and to trust in those duties, that notwithstanding all their sins, they shall be saved for their good Prayers, and reading the Scriptures, and hearing Sermons, for being Baptized, and because they have received the Sacrament, &c. O Brethren, I am afraid sin doth hit many of us here in this particular; what more common now-a-days, than Swearers to be Swearers still, and Drunkards to be Drunkards still, and cheaters to cheat and cozen their Neighbours still, &c. every sinner keeps his sin still, and what Brethren, do you keep your sins, and yet hope to be saved? why yes, you do hope to be saved; you hope to be saved by your duties, if you would

but speak it out, this is the Reason ; as long as you can but come to Church to hear a Sermon now and then, and to say divine service, and Ministers will but let you come to the Sacrament, you think all is well, you care not for amending your lives, you think not of putting away sin, O Brethren, sinners would very fain go to Heaven with their sins in their hearts, and sin hath found them out a way, as they think by trusting to their holy duties ; O faith sin, what needs thou trouble thy self with Repentance, 'tis but sending to the Minister to pray for thee when thou art a dying and all is well. Friends, this is deep policy, of all things be sure you learn this Mytery and take heed of it ; sin will hereby deal with you like *Herod*, mingle your blood with your sacrifices, if all our waters in *England* should be poysoned, would it not be a sad thing ; when People drink of them they must dye, and if they do not drink, they must dye ; so Brethren, sin poysons all our duties, if we perform them we must dye, if we do not perform them we must dye too ; read 66. *Pf.* 18. the Prayers and the Duties of the wicked, *i.e.* such as continue in their sins are an abomi-

abomination to God ; and hear how it will go with them at the day of Judgment ; 13. *Luk.* 25, 26, 27. and 7. *Mat.* 22, 23. O learn to repent, to amend, to turn over a new leaf of your lives, else your Duties, your Prayers, Sermons, Sacraments, all will but add to your greater condemnation at last.

10. Another policy of sin to keep possession when once 'tis got into the heart, is this, sin will perswade you that you cannot live without it ; if you part with me saith sin, then farewell all your happiness, farewell all your merry days, farewell all your friends, you must be singular and alone by your selves, you must be like nobody in the World. O Brethren, cut the throat of this argument before it speak again, else sin by this policy will ruin your Souls. To this end I will lay down some arguments against this argument.

1. Suppose this, that all the World will hate you if you cast out sin, yet know this if you do not cast it out, God will hate you. Now try your selves, which do you most of all set by, the hatred of the World or the hatred of God, 5. *Pf.* 4, 5.

2. You say you love not to be singular,

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you

you would fain be like other People, why do you know what you say? this is to reject God, 1 *Sam.* 8, 4, 5. what follows v. 7. take heed of rejecting the Lord.

3. You would not willingly partake with the wicked in their torments, why then will you partake with them in their sins, these two cannot be separated, 18. *Rev.* 4.

11. Sin hath one piece of policy more to keep possession, and if it see you get the better in all the rest, yet if you have not a great care it will worst you here. 'Tis this, sin will promise you to be gon of its own accord; O saith sin let me alone and you shall not need to trouble your selves, I will be gon time enough; there be but few that do understand this Mystery of sin, hence it is, that many People never think of repenting and reforming, but let sin alone in hope it will wear away of it self; and therefore to advise you herein, take these particulars.

1. Consider that you may be deceived herein, you may think your sin is gone and hath left you, when 'tis nothing so; many a man may think sin hath left his heart, when yet sin is there still, 'tis hid in some
hole

hole or corner. I will shew you this in a few particulars.

1. Some think that their sin is gon, because they have not been tempted to it as formerly. O Brethren, this is no sign, the reason of this may be for want of an object, or by reason of many busineses that have drawn away your thoughts another ways, or perhaps you are now removed into such Places or Families, where you have not the liberty you had; when ever you meet with these circumstances, look then for the temptation again, *2 Chron. 24. 2, 17, 18. v.*

2. Some think that their sin is gon, because they have not committed it for a great while. O Brethren, sin may be in your hearts for all that, sin is like a King, will keep its State, will not be seen every day abroad; many deal with sin as *David* with *Absalom*, *2 Sam. 13. 38, 39.* And *2 of Sam. 14. 1.* *Absalom* you see ran away out of his Fathers Kingdom, but still abroad in his Fathers heart; so sin may seem to be gon, and we have left committing it for a while, yet we love it as much as ever, and keep it in our hearts; see an example of this in *Judas*, what he was in

12. *John. 6.* O *Judas* might think this sin had left him all the while he followed Christ, but though he did not openly steal as others, yet for all this, the Text saith he was a Thief, that is a Thief in his heart, so is it with many, sin we think is gon, but it lies in the heart still.

3. Some think their sin is gon, because they are turned professors, and make a great profession, which formerly they did not; O sin will deceive you here, we have a clear example in *Simon Magus*, 8. *Acts 13.* yet sin was still in his heart, as you may read at the 21, 22, 23. v. O Brethren, sin will lurk and lye hid under an Holy Profession, like *Goliath's* Sword behind a Linen Ephod, 2 *Tim. 3. 5.* 'tis not a man's Baptism, receiving the Sacrament, being of a gathered Church, which People account so much of now-a-days, will clear the heart of sin, sin may deceive you for all that, I might instance in more particulars, but these are enough to shew the truth of it.

2. Consider, that some mens sins do really leave them, and yet for all this they do not leave their sins; as for example, a Drunkard when all his money is spent,
can't

can't go to the Ale-house, the Whore-master when his body is decayed cannot do as formerly, the Swearer is struck dumb, he doth not Swear as formerly, &c. these men have not left their sins, but their sins have left them, and what have they left them to, but the Judgment of God, for all this is far from Repentance or Reformation. No thank to a man that he doth not sin, when he cannot sin; O Brethren, have a care of this, do you leave sin first before sin leave you.

3. Consider, if you leave it to sin, when it will be gon, you will never be rid of it, sin will put us off from time to time, but once more, and then once more, and so to Eternity; if we let it alone and do not thrust it out of our hearts. Observe but this, if you once begin to set a time for Repentance hereafter, you will never repent, do it presently or you will never do it.

And thus you see the great Mystery of sin working into our hearts, and in our hearts; how many ways it hath to get in, and also how many tricks and policies to keep in; sin you see is loath to part with us,

us, God grant we be not as loath to part with our sins.

2. The deceitfulness of the heart in joining with this sin.

You have heard how loath sin is to part with us, now you shall hear how loath our hearts are to part with sin; sin is not more cunning in getting into our hearts, nor more politick in keeping possession there, when once 'tis in, then our hearts, our own deceitful hearts, are in contriving all ways and means possibly to keep it there; when *Saul* would have killed *David*, *Jonathan Sauls* own Son, that came out of his bowels, hides him and secures him; so when we go about to slay our own Iniquities, then our *Jonathans*, our hearts in our own bosoms, they hide the sin and secure it. O Brethren, *Jonathan* never loved a *David*, better than a carnal heart loves sin. And many a cunning shift, do our own deceitful hearts make use off to deceive us, and to keep sin from being turned out of doors. Now I will shew you some of them in these following particulars.

1. Our hearts are very apt to deceive us thus, in telling us what sins, and what lusts

lusts and corruptions we have subdued already ; and they will perswade us that now we have done enough, what need we trouble our selves any further ; this is but one single sin let it alone, and there be but few that have done as much as you have done against most sins. This was the deceit of the young man in the Gospel that came to Christ, whereby his heart deceived him, O he had done all things but one, and that one thing could he by no means perswade his heart unto, you shall find it 19. *Mat.* 16. ^{to} 22. O his heart deceived him in that one thing, every thing else his heart could yield to but not to that one thing ; he thought himself a very brag fellow that could boast of doing so much, all these have I kept, &c. so *Herod* did many things, but one thing he would not do, he would not put away his *Herodias*. O Brethren, let us take heed that our hearts do not deceive us here, in thinking that we have done enough in putting away many sins, when as we have not put away every sin, therefore consider these particulars.

1. One sin may damn our Souls, as well as one wound may kill our bodies ;
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'tis not enough for a man to say I shall never dye, for I come not at the fire and therefore cannot be burned, I come not at the water, and therefore cannot be drowned, I look to every thing that I eat or drink, and therefore cannot be poysoned, I am temperate, and therefore cannot be surfeited, &c. O but for all this care there are other ways to take away this man's life; just so is it here, no man may say I shall not be damned, for I am no Swearer, Drunkard, Coz'ner, Adulterer, Fornicator, Covetous, Prodigal, Malicious Person; well thou hast kept thy self from all these sins and many more, but hast thou no sin in thy heart, if there be but one sin, that may cost thee thy Soul: What our Saviour said of the state of the damned in Hell, may be truly said of the state of unregeneracy, which is the state of Damnation, 12. *Luke 59.* so thou canst not come out of this state of unregeneracy, till thou hast parted with thy very last sin. As no man can take a legal possession of an house, as long as there is any body of the contrary part in the house, so Christ will not take possession of thy Soul, till every sin be out, no sin which is of the
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contrary side to Christ must be there; therefore the Scripture tenders mercy to us only on these terms, if we turn from every sin, 18. *Ezek.* 21, 27, 28. v.

2. We must part from all those sins, for which Christ payed the price, and satisfied God the Father. Now Christ he satisfied for all our sins, when Christ laid down his life, he laid down a sufficient price for every sin, now then surely we ought not to live in any sin for which Christ dyed. O Brethren, what had become of you and I, and all the World if Christ had satisfied the Justice of God for all but one sin. Think of this, whenever you think of keeping any one sin in your hearts.

3. If ever you out-live this one sin you must repent of it at last, and why not better at first, and if you do repent of it, 'twill be a But to your credit, and a blemish to your good name, 1 *Kings* 15. 5. O you see what a great blemish that was to that good man *David*.

4. Lastly. Though you do repent of it, yet it will be a burden and trouble to you as long as you live; your eye-sins (saith one) will prove your eye-sores, and your heart-

heart-sins will prove your heart-sores, 13.
Job 26. No question, but those were some
 sins that *Job* delighted much in, when he
 was young, and they were a great trouble
 to him when he was old. O remember
 this you that are young, the wounds or
 bruises, that some have received when
 young, they have felt the pain of them in
 old age, so here &c. O you know not
 how many years hence, you may smart
 for those sins you delight in now.

2. Our hearts will deceive us again, by
 telling us that they are against this sin,
 they loath, hate it, and abhor it, when
 as they do not use any endeavour to get
 rid of it. Thus I have heard Swearers,
 when they have been reproved for Swear-
 ing, presently say, O God forgive me for
 it, 'tis a base trick that I have got, but I
 cannot leave it; I do not at all approve
 of it. Thus I have heard Drunkards
 speak against Drunkenness, O they do
 not love it, 'tis a beastly filthy sin, but
 they cannot help it, now and then com-
 pany will draw them in. O Friends, see
 plainly how your hearts deceive you, you
 say you do not love such or such a sin, why
 then do you live in it? if you hate it, why
 do

do you not use all means to destroy it: if you hate any of your Neighbours, they shall be sure to know it, by one ill turn or other you will do them, why deal you not thus with your sin you say you hate: say as *Abigail* to *David*, shall not *Shimei* dye? do as *Sarah* when she was angry with her maid *Hagar*, presently out of doors with the Bond-woman and her Child; if you be really angry with sin, if you hate it indeed you will out with it, but if you will still keep it in your hearts, 'tis a sign sin and your hearts are very well agreed; your hearts do but deceive you all this while.

3. Another deceit of the heart is this, 'twill let a man to duties, as to prayer, ay and that to pray against this particular sin, to hear Sermons, ay and to hear this sin reproved, and to perform all other duties, and make a great stir, as if this sin were presently to be sentenced to banishment, and yet all this while keep this sin close and not let it go; like *David* he raised an Army against *Abalom* to fight with him, sends his Army into the Field, but when it comes to the upshot, then *Joab* and the Soldiers must be commanded not to touch the

the young man *Abalom*, O deal kindly with *Abalom* for my sake, O do not kill *Abalom*, if it were so, what need *David* send an Army against him? Brethren, you are all here in the presence of God, you attend on his Ordinances, wherefore come you higher if not to fight against sin your beloved sins, O if you let this sin live, and pray, and read, and hear the word, &c. your hearts do but deceive you all this while: To what purpose are all your duties, if sin be safe still, 1 *James* 21, 22. to hear Sermons, and keep your sins is to deceive your selves; so to pray against sin and to practice sin, is to deceive your selves: *And the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who shall understand it?*

4. Another deceit of the heart is this, when the heart complies with sin only; a man doth not commit the sin, i.e. the outward Act of it, O, but he loves it, he likes it, he approves of it. Now many a man's heart deceives him in this particular, he thinks he is rid of the sin, because he doth not actually commit it: O this is a great deceit. And therefore know this, though a man may have no hand in it (as we say) yet if he hath an heart in it, 'tis enough to make him guilty before God; we have

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an example of this in *Saul*, he had no hand in *Stephens* death, he did not cast a stone at him, he was only a looker on, O but he lik'it very well, he consented to it, that was enough, *Acts 22. 20.* God looks to the heart, feels which way the pulse beats; a man may never have killed a man in his life, yet he may be a murderer in his heart, he may wish his enemies death, and so a man may never be drunk and yet a drunkard, if he love to see others drunk, if that be his sport and delight. As we call a man a hatter, that never made an hat in all his life, only because he keeps a shop furnisht with hats; or an hosier, &c. so though a man never committed such or such sins, yet if his heart be filled with them, 'tis all one in the sight of God, hear what our Saviour saith, *15. Mat. 19.* why saith one, from the hand proceeds murders and thefts, from the eye adulteries and fornications, from the tongue false witness and blasphemies, O but the heart is the forge of all; therefore Brethren, take heed your hearts do not deceive you here, and make you think that you are not guilty of any sin, because you do not commit it. Observe that place well

17. *Jer.* 10. when God comes to punish our ways, he searcheth our hearts, 'tis not enough to cast sin out of the life, if it be not turned out of the heart; this is to thrust one out of the Hall, and bring him into the Parlour; we must not only leave of committing but also loving sin.

5. Another deceit is this, when a man doth commit a sin, his heart will plead thus, that it did not consent to it, he never lik't it in his heart. O this is the common cheat whereby many deceive themselves; when they swear, lye, cozen, backbite, are drunk, or do any thing amiss, O they will say, they have they thank God as good hearts as the best; why Brethren, if your hearts be so good, how come your lives to be so bad, if I see smoak come out at the chimney top, none shall make me believe, but that there is fire on the hearth; *Solomon* will make this plain, and he traceth up sin to the very fountain of it, 6. *Prov.* 12, 13. but whence comes all this that he saith, of the naughty Person in those 2. v. why read the 14. v. and you will see frowardness is in his heart, and no wonder then that he walketh with a froward mouth; there can be no surer sign

sign of a naughty heart than a wicked life, 'tis true an upright sincere heart, may now and then commit a sin, but 'tis not his common trade and practice; but where we see a continual stream of profaneness, dayly running in a man's life and conversation, then we may certainly judge and conclude, that there is a naughty fountain in that man's heart.

6. Another deceit is this; our hearts will persuade us from the comission of sin, to the continuance in sin; our hearts will thus argue with us, you have done so and so, why you can't be much worse; as when a man hath spent half a day idly, O saith he, I'll e'ne make it up an whole day, I cannot do much work now. Thus our hearts will persuade us according to the Proverb, over shooes over boots. Thus *Peters* heart deceived him, after he had denyed Christ once, he then makes no bones of it to deny him again and again, and forswear him too. As sometimes by eating, we get a stomach to eat more, so by committing one sin, we do as it were get us a better stomach to commit more sins, after the first draught, which perhaps we may a little breath at it, sin the

next draught will go down the more glib. O Brethren, take heed of this deceit, 'tis no policy in the World to give ground to sin; such a cunning wrestler keep it off at arms length, if it once come to close and get in, we are sure to fall, and therefore to prevent this deceit, let us make use of the Apostles remedy against anger, as a sovereign balm against every sin, 4. *Eph.* 26, 27. come out of sin presently, as soon as we are fallen into it. O let us not make that an argument, because we have committed one sin weakly, therefore to commit two sins willfully. O remember that sin is unsatiable, like the Daughters of the horse-leach, always crying, give, give, it will never cry enough, hold your hand; and remember also the deceitfulness of your heart, how ready to close with sins motion at any time. O Brethren, lay but these two things together, sins unsatiableness, and our own hearts deceitfulness, and you will see 'tis no good wisdom to try conclusions, between fire and such an heap of Gun-powder.

7. Another deceit is, our hearts will persuade us, that if we are elect and in the favour of God, then our sins shall not be laid

laid to our charge. But O sinner remember this, that this is no sign of election that thou runnest willfully into sin. But will our hearts say, what was *Paul*? was he not an elect Person, while he was a *Saul* a Persecutor, yet he found mercy because elected. Answer, O sinner consider there is a vast difference between thy sins and *Sauls*, *1 Tim.* 1. 13. 26. *Acts.* 9. But thou knowest the contrary, that thou oughtest not to commit these sins, therefore thy sins far exceed *Pauls*, again what a great deceit is this of our hearts, that we should try whether we are elected by sinning. This is to tempt the Holy One of *Israel*; O Brethren, have a care of this deceit; to this end follow the Apostle *Peters* Counsel, *2 Pet.* 1. 10. but how must we do this? how may we make our election sure? how, he lays down the way in the 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. v. which if we walk in we shall never fall. Brethren, know this that you may by living in sin make it out plainly, that you are not elected; but 'tis only by increasing in grace and sanctification, that any man can prove his election.

8. Another deceit is this; our hearts

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will tell us of the judgment and opinions of men concerning such and such sins ; they think well enough of them, and if you do commit them you shall be never the worse thought of for all that. O how many hath this deceit plunged over head and ears in sin ! and therefore to take of this deceit in a word, remember that we are not to inquire the judgment and opinion of men concerning sin, but the judgment of God ; look to the Scripture and see what that saith ; do as *Jehosaphat* 1 *Kings* 22. 6, 7. so when all men speak well of sin, yet go thou to the Scriptures, say is there not a Prophet of the Lords that we might inquire of him ; we must approve our hearts to God and not to men, what God saith we must not do, we must not do it, though all the World say we may do it ; we must answer to God only for our lives, and therefore let us be sure to inquire of God only how to order our lives.

And thus I have given you only a few of those many instances, that might be given of the deceitfulness of our hearts, 17. *Jer.* 9. there is no end of its deceits, but

but from what hath been said we may learn these things.

1. How little we are beholden to our own hearts. *Bernard* speaking of the deceitfulness of the heart saith, *dum me diligenter inspicio, tolerare meipsum non possum.* O Brethren, if you did but know your own hearts, you would not endure them, every carnal natural man carries his worst enemy in his own bosom, and that is his own heart, we may say of our hearts in the language of *David*, 55. *Pf. 11.* O who knows the abundance of wickedness that is in his own heart; nay, not only wickedness, ^{but} deceit and guile, that's that that ruines many Souls; and we may go on with the *Psalmist* v. 12, 13. our own hearts are such enemies, that we cannot hide our selves from them, they are our guides, and if our very guides deceive us, O how great must needs be our misery; how many are there now in Hell that may thank their own hearts for bringing them thither.

2. How little we ought to trust our own hearts; alas if we once trust them they will deceive us. O Brethren, trust not your deceitful wretched hearts, they will

betray you into the hands of sin. Do you not know there is a league between sin and your hearts, 44. 1/. 20. a deceived heart hath turned him aside, sin deceives the heart, and the heart deceives us, O let us not trust to it. Learn Brethren, to be most afraid of your own hearts, they will do you the most mischief; when we have prayed, or heard a Sermon, or kept a Sabbath, our hearts will be telling us we have done well, O believe them not, when we have committed a sin, our hearts will be apt to tell us there is no hurt in it, we need never be troubled for it, O believe them not; O brethren, this is a sad thing that a man must not believe his own heart; you will say 'tis a strange World when we can trust no body, nay I tell you worse yet, you cannot trust your own hearts; oh how carefull, how watchfull ought we to be. Many a man will say, I am tied altogether at home, I dare not go abroad, because I have no body at home, but Servants, Children, none that I can trust. Brethren, every one of us had need be much at home, much in looking to himself and looking to his duties, and looking to his ways, because he hath

hath none that he can trust, 3. *Prov.* 5. a man that trusts his own heart or his own understanding, ruins himself.

But what shall we do then?

Ans. 1. Cross thy heart in all its desires; this was that which did almost ruin *Solomon*, he did gratifye his heart too much, whatever his heart desired presently he consented to it, 2. *Eccles.* 10. when *Solomon* gave his heart so much liberty, he did not think what ^{would} ~~will~~ come of it, he little thought his heart would have cozened him so far, as to have brought him to Idolatry.

2. Labour to know your own hearts better; look into them, into the windings and turnings that are in your hearts, and then perhaps you will believe what we say of your hearts; saith *Bernard*, *nil recte existimat, qui seipsum ignorat*, he that knows not his own heart is a man of no judgment at all. 'Tis not all the learning of the World will make a man a wise man, but the learning of his own heart, you may read more there than in all the Books that ever were Printed, and when you once come to know your own hearts better, you will trust them less.

3. Endeavour to get Christ into your hearts, he will be a faithful steward, a diligent overseer there, he will not suffer your hearts to deceive you. This is that which *Paul* prays ^{for} for the *Ephesians*, 3. *Eph.* 17. read the policy of *Darius*, 6. *Dan.* 1, 2. O Brethren, set Christ over the affairs of your hearts, and you shall be sure to receive no damage.

3. How needful it is for us to have our hearts renewed, 4. *Prov.* 23. *expurga cor Jun. & Tremel.* The *Romans* by the Law of the twelve Tables, were bound to purge and keep clean all fountains of water. O Brethren, let us get our hearts cleansed, they are fountains; a poysoned fountain is very dangerous; a deceitful heart is far more dangerous. Motives,

1. Because 'tis thine own heart, and here are 3 Motives.

1. 'Tis thy duty God commands every man to keep and to cleanse his own heart, to this end God hath entrusted us with them. At the day of Judgment, God will call us to an account for our hearts, as well as our lives.

2. 'Tis thy benefit; when a man fies a pond, or scoures a ditch, he himself hath the

the benefit of it. O Brethren, 'twill be your great profit to have clean hearts; what do you think, is it not more profitable to have a faithful than an unfaithful steward, 16. *Luk.* 1. O so may we complain to many men of their hearts, look to your hearts they will bring you to Hell.

3. 'Tis a sign of sincerity; he that is careful of his own heart, will be the more careful of another man's heart; he that regards his own Soul and Salvation, will the better regard his Brothers Soul and Salvation; but he that is regardless of himself, certainly will less regard others.

2. Out of it are the issues of life; *ex eo prodeunt actiones vite.* As a man's heart is, so is his life; if his heart be for God, his life will be to God's Glory; if thou give thy heart to sin, thou wilt give thy life to sin, and as thou livest so shalt thou dye, and as thou dyest so shall thy Estate be to all Eternity; so that life that flows from the heart, death follows life, and Eternity follows all. It is a matter then you see of great concernment, to have your hearts renewed. A good heart makes

makes a good life, and a good life ends in an happy death, and an happy death brings the Soul to Eternal Happiness.

3. The great danger that follows from the two former considerations, sins subtlety, and our own hearts deceitfulness.

This will appear more plainly in these following particulars; wherein you shall see what cause every one of us have to look about our selves, and the wisdom of the People of God, in being so careful to keep themselves from their own Iniquities. The men of the World they do not understand these things, and therefore they think it a needless scrupulosity in the Saints in being so much afraid of sin, they call it only an humour and a fancy, and I know not what; but learn but to know the danger of sin especially of your own sins, and you shall find there is cause enough for it.

The danger lyes in these following particulars.

1. Here is very great odds against us, two against one, sin without, and our own hearts within us; sin battering, and our own hearts betraying of us. Each of these singly is too hard for us, but when both

both combine together against us, in what a case are we? sin that corrupts our hearts to betray us, and our hearts they conspire with sin to destroy us. O sirs, look in what a dangerous condition we are in. That Garrison is not like to hold out long, when there is an Army in the Field besieging it round about, and Traytors within the Walls and Fort among themselves. Thus sin deals with us as the *Israelites* with the Tribe of *Benjamin*, 20. *Judges* 38, 39, 40, 41. O so doth sin set an ambushment for us, while we are fighting against sins Army without (*viz.*) Temptations, then the lyers in wait our own corruptions they begin to rise against us; so that you see we must fight with both hands, the battel is before and behind; O sirs we must look to it, for evil is determined against us. *Paul* had the tryal of this, and he sets down his own experience in this case, 7. *Rom.* 18. O saith he, I am in such a strait, I am so put to it between two enemies that fight against me at once, that I know not how to perform the good I would do, and he gives us the example verse 21. there is sin without besets him, and you shall see another enemy within, verse 23.
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this makes him cry out for help, verse 24. and the help he finds verse 25. O Brethren, you see there is great danger; *Hercules* durst never encounter with two at once, but every Saint must, therefore keep always one eye shut against the Temptation, and the other eye always open to watch over your own hearts.

2. As we have two enemies against us, so unless we subdue them both, and conquer them both, we shall never be the better; unless we kill both these enemies we kill neither; unless the heart be mortified, sin can never be subdued, and unless sin be subdued, the heart can never be truly mortified. As for example, a man may seem for a while to beat off the temptation, by abstaining from the outward Act and Commission of a sin, yet if this man's heart be not changed he will to this sin again. A man that is a Swearer or a Drunkard, may be so far perswaded of the evil of these sins, that for a while he may leave off these sins of Swearing and of Drunkenness, nay when he is tempted to them, as when he is provoked, as at other times he will forbear his Swearing and Cursing; when he is invited to the Ale-

Ale-house to ill company he will not go; what will you say of such a man? hath he not got the mastery of his sin do you think? Tell me but one thing and I can resolve you, and 'tis this, hath this man his heart reformed and changed, if not, I warrant you he will to his former sins again; this is plain 78. *Psalm* 34, 35. you would think there was a Reformation, O but though the sin were routed, yet the heart was not reformed verse 36, 37. you must conquer both, or else you do as good as nothing at all; here you may see the great danger likewise; you have not only two enemies to fight with at once, but also both these must be destroyed at once; we must rout the sin and reform the heart, either subdue both or none at all.

3. The great danger will further appear in, that these two enemies will revive again as soon as they are slain, so that we must be always killing of them, a thousand deaths will scarce suffice, as long as we live we must be killing them, sin like *Hydra's* head, one cut off two spring up; so that the battel will not be ended till our lives be ended; our corruption
like

like the Leprosie under the Law, not out of the walls till the house be pulled down.

4. The great danger will further appear, in respect of the great love we all of us naturally do bear to these our two grand enemies. They are our own sins and our own hearts; so that we must kill our selves if we would kill these enemies, we must stab our hearts if we would stab our sins. As for example, one man he loves drinking at his heart, another loves gaming at his heart, another loves adultery at his heart, another loves money and gain at his heart, so that he cares not how he comes by it so he have it. O Brethren, judge you your selves, are not these in a dangerous condition. O kill their lusts and you kill their very hearts, 'tis hard for such Persons to be converted; when their sins are nearer to their hearts, then their Souls and they love them better than their Salvation, such Persons are in a dangerous Estate. It is with such Persons as with *Jacob* and his Son *Benjamin*, 'tis said that *Jacob's* life was bound up in *Benjamin's* life, if evil befall *Benjamin*, *Jacob* thinks he must presently dye,

42. Gen.

42. *Gen.* 38. O Brethren, never was a *Jacob* fonder of his *Benjamin*, than are some men of their sins, O they think if they should part with their sins or leave their sins, they can live no longer. *Jacob* could have found in his heart, rather he and all his Family should be starved, than let *Benjamin* be out of his sight, O so will many venture rather to ruin their Souls and lose all, than put sin away. O this is the hardest lesson that Christ can teach to deny our selves, and yet we must learn it if we would be Christ's Disciples. O sinner thou sayst if thou part with such or such a sin thou canst not live; hear what Christ saith, 12. *John* 25. what saith Christ, canst thou not live without thy sin, why then dye rather than let sin live, fling away thine own life, rather than not fling away thine own sin. Every Saint must be like *Sampson*, sin and he must dye both together; we must pull down the house over our own heads, if we would kill these *Philistines* our beloved sins and corruptions, we must kill our selves too; if ever we would have grace to live in us sin and nature, that is corrupt nature must both dye in us.

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5. The danger is great likewise in respect of the occasions of sin ; our corrupt hearts will be always drawing of us into the occasions of this sin ; we are all of us like little Children we love to be in harms way ; we love to keep within sight of the Temptation occasions , saith Mr. *Dike* a reverend Divine, are the taps to give vent to our corruptions ; we do as it were broach these unclean Vessels our filthy hearts, when we seek after occasions of sin ; O this is very dangerous, you shall see it in the example of *David* , *David* you know was an upright man, and sin had a mind to wrestle with *David* to try a fall with him, and how goes sin to work, why thus, that which sin would have *David* do was to commit adultery with *Bathsheba*, now *David's* heart must draw him into the occasion of this sin, else nothing could be done, his sin and his heart go cunningly to work to draw him on to it, and so they did at last ; you shall see it, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2, 3, 4. see how cunningly *David* was drawn into this sin, only by not avoiding the occasion of it, *David* must walk on the top of his house to view about, he little thought whether he was going

going, or what a snare sin had laid for him, then he looks on *Bathsheba* as she was washing her self, O saith his heart presently there is a fair Woman, look what a Beauty is there, thus *David* between his heart and sin hath a sad fall. O Brethren, let us learn to have a care of the very occasions of sin. The Scripture commands us as strictly to avoid the occasions of sin as sin it self, 25. *Dent.* 13. why some perhaps would say, what harm is there in this, as long as I do not buy and sell by them, O but saith God, thou shalt not keep a false weight in thy bag, 'tis a great occasion of sin, and 'twill draw thee into sin at last, so 23. *Prov.* 31. what harm is that, O if thou look on it, there will be tasting and sipping of it at last, remember *David* did but look on *Bathsheba* at first, and you know what followed; so in the 1. Epistle of *John* 5. Chap. 21. 'tis not only keep your selves from Idolatry, but do not keep so much as an Idol, that will prove occasion to Idolatry, so 1. *Thes.* 5. 22. O that all those who blame others for being too precise and scrupulous, would take notice of this. Occasions of sin are the shooing-horns to draw us on to sin,

and in this respect 'tis very dangerous to yield the least inch to our corrupt hearts.

6. The danger is very great likewise, because our hearts are the best weapons we have to fight against sin, as long as the heart is sound with God, sin cannot so easily prevail, but now when our very hearts turn traytors and deceivers, how hard a matter is it to oppose sin; you may see the truth of this in other things, that which a man's heart is set against, 'tis a very hard matter if not altogether impossible to persuade him to it, but when a man hath set his heart to do a thing, you may draw him to it easily with a wet finger as we say. 'Twas the easiest thing in the World, to persuade *Judas* to that great and horrible sin of betraying Christ, when his heart was once set upon it. 13. *John* 27, and 30. verses, mark it, as soon as the Devil was entred into *Judas* heart, he presently goes about his work, the Text saith he went out immediatly; so if sin once get into our hearts, our hearts will quickly draw us into sin. The Devil could never tempt *Eve* to eat the forbidden Apple, till he first had made her in love with it, then she presently falls aboard with it, and carries

carries some to her Husband, I prithee sweet-heart tast some of this Apple, 'tis the best you ever eat ; so 'tis said of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 11. 4. if *Solomons* Wives had not first turned his heart, they could never have turned *Solomon* to Idolatry. O Brethren, 'tis a very dangerous thing, when sin and our hearts are both against us, when our hearts once begin to lean towards sin. A strong and great Tree, if it once be leaning on one side it is the sooner blown down, so when our hearts are leaning downward, sin and temptations then do blow us quite down. O look to your hearts, set your hearts against sin what you can ; when a man's heart is fully bent one ways, 'tis not all the World can persuade him to the contrary, 119. *Pf.* 128. observe it which way *Dauids* heart was bent, to God's precepts, that made him to hate sin, not only abstain from sin but hate sin.

7. The danger will further appear in respect of Repentance ; while our hearts and sin are agreed we can never repent, therefore Repentance is called *uerdyota* the turning of the heart another ways. A man will never repent of what he loves ;

while a man loves sin in his heart, he will never repent of it truly and sincerely, and therefore the Scripture requires the heart as the main thing in conversion, 11. *Acts* 23. where the bent and purpose of the heart goes, that's the way that a man goes that's his rode. Now a man that is riding a journey for a friends company, may ride a mile or two out of his way, or to see a great Town may ride a little out of his way, but he turns into his old rode again, so a sinner his rode is to Hell, perhaps to stop the mouth of Conscience, or for fear of the Laws, or to please a Godly friend he may abstain a while from sin, and so turn out of his rode, O but he will into his old rode of sin again, till the heart be truly changed a man is never truly converted, nor ever truly repents of sin; on the other side when a man's rode lyes to Heaven, he is bent thither with full purpose of heart, though perhaps by reason of a temptation or weakness, he fall now and then into sin and perhaps gross sins, yet he turns into his rode again, *Peter* as soon as he had sinned presently repented. And *David* as soon as *Nathan* the Prophet had awakened him, and discovered to him that
that

that he was out of his rode, presently turned into his rode again. O Brethren, from hence you may gather what an hard nay impossible thing 'tis for a man, whose heart and sin can close together, for such a man while such to repent and be converted, consider then your hearts, and labour to know your own hearts which way they stand affected, which way the frame and bent, and purpose, and edge is turned, and if it be thus that sin and they are not utter enemies, know that your Estate is very dangerous, that as yet you never have truly repented, nor is it possible for you, unless your hearts be changed ever to repent.

8. The danger will appear further in reference to temptations, desertions, distresses; what have any man to support him, when the Devil shall roar against him, and object all his sins and his failings to him, thou committedst such a sin at such a time, thou art guilty of such and such great sins, in all thy best duties thou hast failed and sinned? What can a man answer the Devil in this case, but only this, what we did we did in the uprightness of our hearts, though we have sinned

and failed in our best duties, it was full
fore against our minds, the bent and pur-
pose of our hearts was to have served God
better, and to have lived better. But now
on the other side when poverty, sickness,
troubles, temptations, death comes, O
what a desperate dangerous condition is
that man in, that hath the Devil to accuse
him, his heart to witness against him, and
God to condemn him; when he knows
that what he hath done he hath done out
of a wicked heart, and that he hath com-
mitted, no sin but his heart have been ve-
ry forward and active in it. O Brethren,
think of this before these things come up-
on you; get your hearts turned, chang-
ed, altered, reformed, get an heart for
God and for Christ, and you will have no
heart for sin, nay for no sin whatever, no
not the most beloved sin in the World.
Else if you will not take advice when
your sorrows and horrors shall seize upon
you, then may you say as sick People when
they are in great pain, O I may thank my
self for this, because I eat such a thing and
such a thing, and drank such a liquor,
such a Wine, when all Friends and Phy-
sicians told me 'twas hurtful for me, and
would

would bring me into the condition that I am now in, but I would then believe and regard none of them ; so you, O I may thank my self for these terrors of conscience, I was forewarned of such and such sins, such an evil course of life, all Ministers and Friends, told me what would come of me, but O my wicked heart that would not let me hearken to them, but would still draw me on further and further into sin, till now the Lord is executing his fierce wrath upon me. Friends, this may be the case of any of us, if we will not now we see the subtlety of sin, the deceitfulness of our own hearts and the danger that comes from both, take warning while it is time, and turn every sin even our own sin out of our hearts, that with full purpose of heart we may cleave to the Lord.

2. Some Scruples and objections, and cases of divers Persons concerning this sin their own Iniquity.

You have heard Brethren, from this Text the great Mystery of our own Iniquity ; a truth of great and weighty importance.

portance to every one of us ; there is none of us all can know himself, or his own condition well, unless he know his own sin ; there can be no true Repentance, Reformation, or Conversion wrought in any man till this sin be cast out ; we do but labour in vain, while we labour to cast out other sins and let this sin alone. As every great tree hath some great roots, that run strait downward into the ground, which we call Tap-roots ; cut all the other roots yet the tree stands firm till these be cut, O this sin is the Tap-root that holds the sinner fast, when he hath left all other sins, yet this keeps him in his unregenerate state still. This is the Devils nest-egg, that which he leaves in the Soul to keep possession as it were for him. O Brethren, if you mind the good of your Souls mind these things ; you have heard the great policy of this sin working into the heart, and working in the heart, getting possession and keeping possession, you have heard likewise the deceitfulness of our own corrupt hearts, assisting this sin what they can, you see there is danger enough ; but this is not all, there is greater danger yet behind, you shall find that there is not only

only the hand of *Joab*, (I mean our own hearts) but also *Achitophels* head-piece in all this. Behold a third enemy against us, and that's the Devil, and he is more dangerous than either of the two former, he speaks us fairly, but intends nothing but mischief against us; the Devil he comes on both sides of us; some Persons he persuades that they have not yet cast out this sin, and so would drive them to despair, others he persuades that they have already cast out this sin, there work is done and so drives them to presumption. The first way he sets on the Godly, he envies their happiness, and therefore like the worm at the root of *Jonah's* Goard strives to blast all their comforts; the last way he sets upon the wicked, fearing least they should repent and be converted, he persuades them that all is well they have no beloved sin, no sin that shall keep them out of Heaven, and so leads them through a fools paradise to Hell. Here's the summ of the Devils cunning, he will needs persuade the Godly, that they have not done what they have done, and he will needs persuade the wicked, that they have done what they have not done; and thus his trade goes
for-

forward, by making converted Persons doubt of their conversion, and unconverted Persons presume of their conversion, and take it for granted without any grounds or reasons, that they shall surely be saved. Thus he turns this Doctrin into gall and wormwood to the Godly, and into poyson to the Wicked. Now that we may the better defeat the wicked counsel of this *Achitophel*, I will lay you down the doubts, and scruples, and objections that the Godly make against themselves in the first place, and answer them, and then in the second place, examin the grounds, and reasons, and arguments of the Wicked, whereby they plead for themselves that they are truly converted, and have kept themselves from their own Iniquity, wherein I will give you several Antidotes against this Poyson, and all very plainly.

First, Scruples and Objections of Godly Persons against themselves about their own Iniquity.

These are very many, but I shall only name some of the chiefest, and those that are

are most common, wherein most of you that have any experience of the workings of your hearts, or have at any time lay under doubts and fears, and troubles of mind may second me with your own experience, and say, O thus and thus it hath been with me, and this hath been my case. And so when you have once taken measure of the Devils foot, you may the more easily be able to discern and track his footsteps for the future.

1. *Scruple*, some good Persons will be apt to cry out, that they have not kept themselves from their own Iniquity, because they are sensible of their Hypocrisie, and the Text makes this a true note of sincerity and uprightness, I was also upright — and kept my self — O but saith a poor Soul, I am an Hypocrite, and whatever I have done 'tis Hypocrisie, and therefore I can take no comfort from this Doctrine.

Ans^w. 1. You must know, that we are all of us born Hypocrites, for we have all of us the seeds of this sin, as well as of all other sins in our natures; but though every one, Saints as well as Sinners (as nothing is more sure) have Hypocrisie in them,

them, yet it doth not follow, that all are in a state of Hypocrisie, or Hypocrites in state as we say, so that as a late Divine Doctor *Harris* observes, the Question must not be whether Hypocrisie be in you, for that you may be sure of, but whether Hypocrisie reigns in you ; for know this for your comfort, that if you discern Hypocrisie in you, and you bewail it, loath it, abhor it, and labour all that you can against it, sure it doth not reign in you ; we may apply that particularly to this sin of Hypocrisie, what the Apostle saith of sin in the general, in the *6. Rom. 11*. Reckon your selves dead unto sin, *i.e.* in a state of grace, O but who may account himself so, or when may a man reckon so and reckon right ? the Apostle tells us verse the 12. if sin do not reign in you, 'tis a sign you are in a state of Grace though sin be in you. This is the Gospel account of it ; just so may we say of Hypocrisie, if Hypocrisie do not reign in us (though there may be some Hypocrisie in us) yet we may in a Gospel sense account our selves to be no Hypocrites. To make this plain to you, there is a Rising or Rebellion in *England* against the King, the Rebels

bells come into this Town, here they quarter, they lye in our houses, eat of our meat and drink of our beer, yet if we do not entertain them willingly, but 'tis full sore against our minds, we do what we can to be rid of them, we openly testifie against them we are not to be accounted Rebels; so is it with this sin of Hypocrisie or any other sin, though it will abide in us and with us, yet if we hate it, and labour against it, and would fain be rid of it; God will not account us, as Hypocrites.

2. 'Tis a good sign of sincerity and true grace, for any man to complain of his Hypocrisie. Hypocrites they are always boasting of their sincerity; and therefore, Hypocrites are like Ranters, which wear more silver lace on their backs, than they have silver in their pockets; they boast of their holiness, *i.e.* their external holiness, when as they have not a drachm of true grace in their hearts; the best of men have always the worst thoughts of themselves. Holy Mr. *Bradford* would many times subscribe himself in his Letters, *John* the Hypocrite, and a very painted Sepulchre, see what *Agur* one of the wisest men saith

saith of himself, *Prov.* 30. 33. *Job* an upright man, yet see *Job* 42. 6. But now on the other side, the Hypocrite doth all that he can to justifie himself, you may know who is an Hypocrite by this, that man that will not own himself to be an Hypocrite. And therefore as the Hypocrite is never the better for justifying himself, so a good Christian, a sincere heart is never the worse for condemning himself, 18. *Luke* 13, 14.

3. The best rule to judge of our Hypocrisie is by our love, do we love any sin, why then our heart is not upright with God? though we commit many sins and great sins, yet if we do not love them nor delight in them, 'tis our grief that we do commit them, this is a sign of sincerity. As *David* could say, I hate every false way, though he could not say, I have kept my self from every false way. *David* committed many a sin, yet *David* never loved any sin; why, his heart was set upon God. A true Saint, when he hath committed any sin, he will cry out as the wandring Traveller, O I am out of my way, pray set me into it again. *Peter* was no Hypocrite, though for fear he
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denyed Christ and forswore him; O'twas not his mind to do so, he did it out of fear, full sore against his will, and it cost him many a bitter tear for it. *Judas* he was the right Hypocrite, he made it a set plotted business to betray Christ, he did it with his heart, and then he thought to smooth all over with a kiss at last. Thus you may see what is Hypocrisie, and learn how to judge of your selves or others, that is not Hypocrisie when a man complains how bad he is, but when a man would fain seem to be better than he is, that's Hypocrisie when a man would cover a wicked heart under an Holy Profession.

4. A word of advice to such who are thus grieved and troubled for their Hypocrisie; know for your comfort that this is but a Temptation of the Devil, who envies the inward joy and peace of a good Conscience, and therefore seeks by all means to blank and disturb you, and as it is a temptation, so be careful that it doth not drive you from your duty; the Devil hath much prevailed this way, and many have cryed out, why should I pray, or hear, or read, or go to the Sacrament,

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why

why I am an Hypocrite, 'twill be all in vain, God will never accept of me nor of my duties, take heed of such a thought as this; do your duty, keep on your way though it be your grief, you cannot do better, endeavour to do your best, and let this be your comfort you would fain be better and do better. Follow the example of the Prodigal, in the 15. *Luk.* 18, 19. the Prodigal might have thought thus with himself, why should I think of returning to my Father, can I ever think my Father will own me, that have been such a Wretch to spend all that he gave me so vainly and foolishly, and to run away from him, yet you see he is resolved to go, and you shall see the event to your comfort, verse the 20. Never forsake God in point of duty, and he will never forsake you in point of mercy.

2. Scruple, O but some will say, I am afraid I am no sincere Christian, I have not kept my self from mine Iniquity, for I have run again and again into the commission of the same sins, I have relapsed many times after Prayers, and Confession of sin, and Promise of Amendment,

yet

yet have I committed the same sin again and again.

Ans^r. 1. I will lay down some propositions.

1. It cannot be denyed, but that the Saints themselves are subject to this falling sickness, they have in them the seeds of Apostacy as well as others. This appears from many examples in Scripture, *Abraham* twice denyed his Wife *Sarah*, nay and that was not all, he made a bargain to do so still, 20. *Gen.* 13. *David*, what did he less than commit murder intentionally, when he swore he would be the death of *Nabal* and all his innocent Family, so he confesseth, 1 *Sam.* 25. 32, 33, 34. yet after this he commits actual murder on *Uriah*; how oft in the Book of Judges did the Church sin the sin of Idolatry, and repented and fell again and again; now we must unchurch the Church of the *Jews*, if we say that the People of God never relapse, or fall into the same sin after Repentance. *Vid.* Dr. *Goodwins* folly of relapsing.

2. The Scripture doth no where tell us, that if a man after Humiliation or Repentance fall into the same sin again,

he shall not be pardoned, nay we may prove the contrary.

1. God will certainly forgive us as much as we are commanded to forgive our Brother, 17. *Luk.* 3, 4. 18. *Mat.* 21, 22. Now God is much more infinite in mercy than we are, and certainly if God will not limit us any time from forgiving our Brethren, we ought not to limit the mercy of God, as to say if we commit a sin so many times, it shall not be forgiven.

2. There is no sin exempted from pardon in Scripture, but the sin against the Holy Ghost, and the reason of it is this, that sin shall never be pardoned, because he that commits it can never repent of it. But now a man may repent of his falling again into the self same sin, and therefore that sin may be pardoned, 3. *Jeremiah* 12.

3. A man may commit the same sin often, and yet be in Christ, and in a state of grace for all that; *Peter* thrice denied Christ, and yet Christ did not reject him for all that, and the Disciples of Christ, we read that twice they contended for the Superiority and Supremacy, and yet for all this they continued still in the favour of Christ;

Christ; the reason of this is, that all those that are in Christ once, are ever in Christ, 13. *John*. 1. 'tis not all the sins in the World can take off the love of Christ from any of his Saints. Christ will never suffer any of his Saints so to fall as to fall quite away. Though like *Eutichus* they fall from the third loft, yet there is life, the life of Grace in them.

4. A man may commit the same sin often, and yet for all that, that sin may not be his beloved sin his own Iniquity; he may commit it only out of fear, as *Abraham* and *Peter* did, or through the violence of the Temptation, as *David* his murder the second time, or through the strength and power of corruption, or for want of watchfulness, &c. Now for all this a true Saint commits the same sin again and again, yet he may not love it, nor delight in it, nor desire to live in it, his heart may be another way for all that. These things may serve for consolation to such as are herein concerned, but withal,

2. Let them take these cautions along with them.

1. Take heed after you are once gotten up of falling again, a man that falls once

and hath no harm, let him not be too venturous ; the second time he may break his leg or arm, the third time he may break his neck, 5. *John* 14. 'twas mercy in Christ you were not in Hell for the first sin, take heed of sinning against mercy ; every fall after the first fall is a sin against mercy ; and sins against mercy will run deep in score against us.

2. Take heed of presuming to commit the same sin again and again, because many of the Saints have done so ; though I say, this will not thrust a man out of Christ, yet 'twill be a strong presumption that such Persons were never in Christ. Observe but *David*, what he Prays for after his fall in 51. *Pf.* 10. in the Margin, a constant spirit. O, *David* takes a course to secure himself from falling again, Lord saith he, give me such an heart, as I may never let sin in more ; though *David* commit the same sins, the second time 'twas his grief. A man that has once stumbled by walking in the dark, the next time he will have a light with him. Follow the Saints not in their sins, but in their carefulness against sin. The Saints falls should make us take heed of falling ; if the winds blow

blow down such tall Cedars, such strong Oakes, well may the under Shrubs tremble.

3. Take heed of relying too much on your own strength. *Inte stas & non stas* Aug. when you see that *Satan* hath thrown you so often, O labour for strength from Christ, there is sure footing in him and only in him; we never read of *Paul* that ever he fell after his Repentance, and the reason you have in the 2. *Galath*, 20. Christ lived in *Paul*, and that kept him upright.

4. Make use of all means to keep you from relapsing, I will note two or three.

1. Keep conscience always tender, take heed of hardness of heart, when sin hath once pricked you to the heart, keep the wound open, do not sear it with more sins. A tender conscience is like the eye, be it but a small mote or dust fallen into it, it never leaves till it hath wept it out.

2. Be sure you repent to purpose for sin, that will keep you from sinning again, when a man hath paid dear for suretyship, and his friend comes again and desires him to be bound once more, no faith he, I smart-

ed enough the last time. When *Satan* tempts you again, look back to your former Repentance, and see what 'twill cost you, 3. *Lam.* 19, 20. this will keep you humble.

3. Take our Saviours own receipt, in 26. *Mat.* 41. Watch and Pray, &c.

I will conclude with the words of Mr. *Capel* a Reverend Divine. Let us then say, that 'tis a dangerous case for a Godly man to sin the same sin after Repentance; what if it do not put him out of Christ? What if it do not hang him? yet it burns him in the hand, whips him up and down the Town, my meaning is, that it doth cast him into a bed of miserable sorrow; but withal we must say, it may possibly be, that after true and hearty Repentance for such a fault, a Child of God may chance to fall into the same sin again and again, how often I cannot tell, but this I can tell, that how often soever he sinneth, let him repent and return, and his pardon is ready. These things are spoken only for the comfort of such as fall again and again through weakness, therefore with all, remember what the Scripture saith of such as do willingly and willfully fall again and again,

again, and make^{it} their trade, as most do now-a-days of Praying and Sinning, and Sinning and Praying, which is abominable, and none of these things spoken belong to such, 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. They are no Children of God, but dogs and swine that do so. A Sheep may fall twice or thrice into the same ditch, but the Sow returns to it again and again, 'tis her delight to be there.

3. Scruple. Some will say we are none of those that have kept our selves from our own Iniquities, because they do not find the benefit and influences of the ordinances upon their hearts as others do, they cannot rejoyce and be comforted with the word and promises as others are, they are not refreshed after duties as others are, sure some *Achan* or other is still in us, else God would be with us in his Ordinances.

Answer twofold. 1. By way of confession; 'tis true, this sin if it be still in any of us, and we do own it and countenance it, this is enough to hinder the power, and vertue, and comfort of the Ordinances; if we would live under the power of the Ordinances, we must not live under the power of any one sin, 13. *Mat.* 58. where

58. where was this, see verse 54. Christ Preached there, and that to their astonishment, but yet his Preaching had little or no effect, he did not many mighty works, the power of it and vertue of it did not reach them, and why so the Text tells us, because of their unbelief, they were under the power of that sin. O sinner, thou comest to the Ordinances for peace and comfort, just as *Foram* sent to *Jehu*, is it peace *Jehu*? But what said he? What peace so long as there are so many Whoredoms; so, O poor Soul, what peace canst thou expect, so long as sin is in thee? Sin hardens thy heart and makes it like the stony ground, and what good can the Word or the Ordinances do on the stony ground? You know what hindered *Herod*, that he received no good at all by *John* Baptist Preaching, O he had an *Herodias* in his heart; the Text tells us, that he heard *John* gladly and did many things, O but *Herodias* spoiled all; had it not been for that one sin which *Herod* would not part withal, he might have been a sincere convert for ought we know. This sin will drive the word out of our hearts, as fast as it is set home upon our hearts; it will
keep

keep the Soul lean and ill favoured without any comfort under the fattest Ordinances. But this I speak only by way of concession. I am to speak to true sincere hearted *Nathaniels*, that keep no sin in their hearts, or desire and endeavour to be rid of every sin; name any sin to them they cannot say they have any love to it, and these Persons they complain, that they feel not the influences of the Ordinances upon their Souls, they feel not the power and comfort of them, to these

2. Two words of caution.

1. Take heed that this be not false, examine the case well, perhaps you may speak without your books; there be many complain of this, who yet have no reason to complain, they think they are never the better for the Ordinances, when indeed they are much the better. Now that you may state the Question aright, consider these two things.

1. What are the influences of the Ordinances; for answer to this, there is a four-fold influence that the Ordinances have, &c.

1. A pricking wounding influence, 'tis such an influence as makes a man sensible of

of his condition; every man by nature hath a spiritual kind of lethargie, such a Disease in his Soul as the num-palsie is to the Body, he is quite sottish and senseless, hath not so much as the understanding of a bruit, to know whether it be well or ill with him, knows not whether he belong to Christ or the Devil, is not sensible that he is in danger of Hell. Now this is the first power and influence of the Ordinances, to bring a man to his right senses, to make him understand his condition, 2. *Acts* 37. here the word reacht to the quick, before they were not sensible of what they had done. O Brethren, there be many that never felt this pricking, wounding power of the Ordinances, never yet were made sensible of their conditions, that think all is well with them, and hope to be saved as well as the best; O if once they were but pricked to the heart, how would they roar and cry out, how would they be started at it, to see the misery they are in.

2. An humbling influence; when a man is sensible of his lost condition, then he begins to be humble, he will never be humble till now; poverty will bring a
man

man upon his knees; O then what will such a conviction as this is do, when a man sees that he is ready to drop into Hell, that he must endure the wrath of God to all Eternity. O this makes the Soul humble and pliable before God, the man now is like melted wax, God may work him how he pleaseth, command what he will he is ready to obey, 9. *Acts* 6.

3. A strengthening influence; after the word hath weakened the power of sin in a man, then it strengthens the Soul with grace, as Physicians when they have thoroughly purged their Sick man, and so made him weak, then they give him strengthening meats; so the word conveys Faith and Hope, and other strengthening graces into the Soul; so 'tis said of Paul after his Humiliation, 9. *Acts* 22. and so he prays for the *Ephesians* in the 3. *Eph.* 16. Now this strength the word conveys to the Soul, from the Spirit of Christ to enable him against sin, and all other oppositions whatever to an holy life, 1. *Colos.* 10, 11.

4. A comforting influence; this is the highest of all, when a Soul is comforted under the Ordinances, and is filled with joy

joy and delight, and abundance of satisfaction, 2. *Cant.* 3, 4. now is the Soul as it were in Christ's Banqueting House, or House of Wine, *i. e.* the Soul rejoyceth, and is glad of the presence of Christ, like *John* Baptist in *Elizabeth's* Womb leaps and skips for joy. Thus it is with many a Soul under the power and influences of the Ordinances, as those converts, 2. *Acts* 37. there's pricking, but what follows? read the 46. verse and you will see.

2. Consider and examine your selves, whether you have felt none of these influences under the Ordinances; perhaps you have not felt the comforting influence, O do not say therefore that there is no influence, perhaps you find little or no strength, yet say not 'tis in vain, the means of grace are in vain to my Soul; have the word humbled you, have it pricked your hearts and made you sick of sin, and sensible in what a lost condition you are in by nature, bless God for that, and wait still on him in the ways of his Ordinances, you shall find comfort at last; you must not expect to come to the highest pitch presently, as our Quakers do, as soon as any turns Quaker, presently he is full of joy and comfort
as

as his heart can wish, suspect such a thing as not the work of God, God will have us thoroughly humbled before comfort comes in. *Naaman* was bid go into *Jordan* seven times and wash, now if *Naaman* had after the first or second washing come out of *Jordan*, and finding himself not cleansed, left the waters and said there was no vertue in them, would you not say the fault was his own. Our Saviour Christ will teach us the true way to comfort, i.e. true comfort indeed, 5. *Mat. 4.* be content to mourn and be humbled a while, and wait still on God to perfect his work in you.

2. Take heed that this be not true, O 'tis a sad thing to be under the Ordinances, and never the better for them, and therefore labour for these influences when you are sensible of the want of them; means,

1. Go not out in your own strength; think not that you of your selves are able to pray, or read, or hear with profit; O you must go out of your selves, get Christ along with you, 21. *John 3. 4. 5. 6.* take Christ along with you, go forth in his strength and not in your own strength, the

the want of this may be a means of your miscarriage.

2. Look out beyond all Duties and Ordinances; do not rest satisfied when you have Prayed, or heard a Sermon, or received a Sacrament; let not that be all your Religion only to do these things; but look further, the Ordinances are but means to the attaining of a further end, and the main end is to bring us in to Christ, O look to the end whether you are brought nearer and nearer to Christ by any Ordinance, whether you love Christ more, and live to Christ more than ever, take heed of making the Ordinances your end, this will hinder you of your blessing.

3. To name no more, be much in Prayer to God for an influence upon your Souls, sin that dams and stops up these Waters of the Sanctuary, Prayer opens the sluices again; sin poysons these fountains, Prayer, that must heal them; Prayer, that brings down the influences of the clouds upon the Earth, and Prayer, that brings down the influences of the Ordinances upon the Soul; the Spirit is obtained by Prayer, and where the Spirit moves in the Ordinance, there

there be sure is an influence; be much in Prayer to God to bleſs all his Ordinances and Means of Grace to you, and you will quickly find the benefit of it.

4. *Scruple.* Many a poor Soul complains, O I am afraid that I have this mine own Iniquity ſtill in me, that I have not yet ſubdued it, for I diſcern and ſee more ſin in me now than ever before, I find ſin more buſie and ſtronger, and more prevailing in me than ever before.

Anſw. 1. Conſider what is the work of conversion, 26. *Acts* 18. you ſee that the ſtate of conversion is a ſtate of light; when a man lies in a dark dungeon, he ſees not the dirt and the ſpots and filth about his cloathes, nor the vermine and naſtineſs about him, but bring this man into the light, and then he will ſee every ſpot, and all vermine crawling about him. A man before conversion he is quite in the dark, nay darkneſs it ſelf, 5. *Eph.* 7, 8. now what can darkneſs ſee? hence it is that 'tis ſo hard a matter to perſuade a wicked man that he is a ſinner, he will not believe it, though he be drunk every day and ſwear every minute, yet this man will not be perſuaded, but he is a good
O man

man as good a Saint as any ; alas poor creature, he is in darkness and sees not his filthiness, and cannot be persuaded 'tis so ill with him as 'tis ; but let this man be converted, *i.e.* brought into the light, O then he will complain of himself as the vilest creature living, now he sees more sin in him than ever he did. *Paul* before his conversion what he thought of himself he tells us, 3. *Philip*. 6. after conversion, he thought otherwise, 1. *Tim*. 1. 15.

But you say you find sin stronger now than before, therefore,

2. Consider that after conversion, there is a new principle of grace put into the Soul, and that resists the corruption that is in us ; 'tis with every converted Person as with *Rebecca*, 25. *Gen*. 21, 22, 23. before conversion, the Devil hath the full possession of the whole man, and then what follows, see 11. *Luke* 21. there is no disturbance or disquietness in that man's Soul, the Devil he rules there, and he's content, and sin that hath a warm nest there and that's content, and the sinner he is at his liberty of sinning and he is content too, and so all is well, no disturbance at all, all is peace ; but now after conversion,

sion, there is a quite contrary principle of grace, and that fights with sin, and sin that begins to muster up all its forces, hence comes the Soul to complain of the power and strength of sin. As a man that is quite under water, feels not the weight of all the Tuns of water on his back, but let him come out and take but a serkin of water on his shoulders, and he will feel the burden; sin is like a *Bee*, let it alone, suffer it to crawl about your hands or face, and you cannot tell whether it hath a sting or no, but anger it or beat it off, and it will sting you presently. A man is sick and while he feeds the distemper he feels not much pain, but let him take Physick to drive out the distemper, then he grows sicker and sicker, because the Physick is contending with the distemper, doth that man think he is worse than he was before? so here, &c.

3. Consider further, that the Devil will trouble you more now than ever, because you are got out of his chain; the Devil he roars and raves, when he is like to loose one of his Pri-ners, he will endeavour all that he can to bring such Souls back again to him self.

4. Lastly, from all that hath been said, we may conclude, that certainly 'tis a sign of a state of grace for any man to be in this condition, we never read in Scripture, nor never heard of unregenerate Persons complaining after this sort; *Paul* before his conversion never complained thus, but afterwards *Rom. 7. 24.* O comfort your selves poor Souls that thus groan under the Burden of sin, you are the Persons that shall be welcome to Christ, 11. *Mat. 28.* comfort your selves the Alarum is founded, and war is proclaimed between you and your sins, nay the Battel is begun and for your further comfort, it shall assuredly end in victory, 7. *Rom. 25.*

5. Scruple. O but some poor Soul may say, though for the present I abstain from this sin mine own Iniquity, and can now say I love no sin, yet am I afraid of falling back again, because I have not (I fear) thoroughly repented of this sin, my Repentance is only a slight formal Repentance, I have not been humbled nor grieved to the purpose, Oh this is my fear, and this is that which troubles me very much.

Ans. 1. 'Tis a good sign that Person
hath

hath truly repented, who is troubled that he hath repented no better, this very thing is part of thy Repentance; again 'tis a good sign that man hath repented, and that truly of sin, that is afraid of committing that sin again, there is none more afraid of sin than a truly converted penitent Person; this fear of falling again and carefulness against sin for the future, sure are the marks and tokens the Apostle gives of true Godly sorrow for sin, *2 Corinth.* 7. 10, 11. I add that man is furthest from falling that is most fearful of falling. But,

2. By way of direction; Repentance being a work of such great concernment, and a thing that may be and is so often counterfeited, it behoves every one of us for our better satisfaction and surety to try our Repentance. Now you shall know, whether you have truly repented or no by these two signs.

(1.) By its root. (2.) by its fruit. Repentance in Scripture is compared to a tree; the tree hath roots but they lye under ground every body cannot see them, but when we see a tree stand against many great winds and strong blasts, and when

we see it green and flourishing, we may know it hath good roots, 'tis well rooted, again our Saviour tells us, a tree is known by its fruits, and therefore we must look to these two.

1. The root of Repentance, and that's humiliation, now the deeper the root the stronger the tree, the deeper our humiliation, the stronger are we in grace and holiness; what's the reason that bulrushes bow, and bend, and turn backwards and forwards with every wind, but because they have no good root, 2. Col. 6; 7. rooted and stablished both go together, ῥιζωμένοι καὶ βεβαίωμένοι. Now humiliation lay a deep sure foundation, being well rooted makes him firm and strong; this is twofold.

1. In respect of what is past; O he is much humbled and cast down for what is past, though God will forget what he hath done, yet he will never forget it, though God will never cast it in his dish, yet he will be always hitting himself in the teeth with it ever now and then. Thus did *Paul*, he was ever now and then telling what a Persecutor he was, O that troubled him and vexed him, that ever he should

should Persecute Christ. O true humiliation will make us do so, we shall never be well pleased with our corrupt nature as long as we live, we shall be always speaking against our selves what we were heretofore.

2. There is another branch of this root, and that respects the time to come, when we are thoroughly humbled for what is past, we shall be very fearful for the future. 2. *Philip. 12. cum timore & tremore.* O he is like a fearful man that dares not climb up any high steep place, dares not walk aloft for fear of falling, therefore he keeps the lowest ground; so the Apostle directs 11. *Rom. 20. 2.* The fruits of Repentance; what is a tree good for if it bears no fruit, away with it, so what is Repentance good for, I mean that Repentance that hath no fruits, 3. *Mat. 8.* do not saith *John* Baptist think your selves to be Saints, because you come to hear me Preach or be Baptized, no bring forth your fruits, and such fruits as are meet for Repentance, *ἐξ ἑλπίος καὶ μετάνοίας*, worthy the name of Repentance.

Now there are two parts of Repentance.

1. A turning from sin.
2. A turning unto God or unto Godliness.

Now our fruits must be answerable to both these parts of Repentance.

1. The first part turning from sin, your loathing of sin must be as great as formerly your loving of it, your hatred as great against it as formerly you delighted in it; *ea specialiter horreas, quæ specialiter appetebas.* Bern. let thy best beloved sins be most abhorred by thee, let them be like the *Israelites* dainty Quails, O how did they long for them, and afterwards they could not endure them, they stunk in their Nostrils; deal with thy beloved sin as *Amnon* with *Tamar*, *2 Sam.* 13. 15, 16, 17. 1. He hated her. 2. He would not hearken to her motion. 3. He put her out of doors. 4. He bolted her out, do so with sin.

2. The second part turning to God and Godliness.

Do as much for God and Christ as ever you did for sin, love Holiness as much as ever you loved Wickedness. Nay take as much pains in the ways of God, as ever in the paths of Unrighteousness; so did

did *Paul*, we have both his Example and Precept, *1 Cor.* 15. 9, 10. *6. Rom.* 19. we must not saith one bind our selves to a trade of sin, and use Religion only as a recreation. No but we must work as hard in Righteousness, as formerly we have wrought in sin. Nay further, as we have been scandals to others to turn them out of the way by reason of our sins, so now we must be good examples, not only to keep in the way our selves, but to bring others into the ways of Holiness also.

Now examin your Repentance by these signs, and you need never trouble your selves, you shall not fall, so saith the Apostle, *2 Pet.* 1. 30. how so, see the fruits of Repentance verses 5, 6, &c. be as fearful and as careful of falling as you will 'tis the better, but such Persons may be comforted, that they shall never fall away ~~see~~ totally and finally from Christ and Grace.

6. Scruple. O but say some, if we are such as have cast out every sin, even our most beloved sins, how comes it to pass that we are so much afraid of Death, and so loath and unwilling to dye? O this

is our great trouble that we are so afraid of death, whereas a true convert, one that is quite freed from sin (which is the sting of death) he rejoiceth and triumpheth over it. O death where is thy sting ! and O grave where is thy victory !

Answer briefly 4 ways.

1. By concession in two particulars.

1. That there is nothing in all this World so terrible as death is, 'tis φοβερόν of all terrible things the most terrible, saith the Philosopher ; the King of Terrors saith the Scripture, 18. Job. 14. It made that great *Ahasuerus* so afraid, that he would suffer none to come into his Court in Mourning Apparel ; and another great King commanded all his Servants when he was sick, that none should so much as speak of death in his hearing ; there is no Ague fit will make a man's face look paler, and his whole body quake and tremble, more than the very thoughts and apprehension of death. But,

2. That sin as it is the only thing that brought death into the World, so 'tis the only thing that makes it look so terribly.

As

As a man that hath the yellow jaundice, every thing that he looks on seems yellow, so he that hath sin in his Conscience, O what a ghastly sight is death to that man! take only the instance of *Cain*, one that had a guilty Conscience, 4. *Gen.* 13. why so? see the latter end of verse the 14. lo cries out the sinner of death, O wherever it find me it will slay me, 'twill spoil me of all my comforts and pleasures, rob me of all my riches and treasures, pull down my house (my body) about my ears, drag my naked Soul to Judgment, deliver me over to Devils to be tormented for ever and ever. O sinners, you that make a mock, a sport of sin; consider, are not these terrible things! you that will be rich right or wrong, you that will domineer and have your minds, you that laugh and scoff at holiness, jeer at Sermons, O for all this be sure you do not forget yourselves but be sure you tremble at death! O think how terrible it would be to you should a voice from Heaven say, this very day or this very hour, your Souls shall be required of you.

2. By way of distinction; there is a twofold fear of death, one that is natural
pro-

proceeding from meer nature, as nature it self abhors her own destruction and dissolution; the other sinful, as proceeding from the guilt of sin, when the Soul knows that to Hell it must go as soon as he is dead. The natural fear of death is lawful, and may be found in true Saints. *David* he Prays against death, *39. Psalm 13.* so *Hezekiah* weeps and mourns, and prays at the news of death, *2 Kings 20. 1, 2, 3.* yea our Saviour Christ himself was troubled and very sorrowful at the approach of death, *14. Mark 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.* Now this fear of death could not be sinful because it was in Christ who knew no sin, again 'tis said of Christ, that he took upon him all our infirmities sin only excepted; so that the fear of death may be in a Child of God. 1. As 'tis a dissolution of nature. 2. As 'tis a punishment for sin, so every Child of God ought to fear it.

3. By way of consolation, to any true hearted Christian, that complains of the fear of death. O let this be thy comfort, thou fearest death without a cause; there is many a true Saint fears death that hath no cause at all to fear it; and whence is this, but only because he wants his assurance.

rance. A man that is condemned to dye, O he weeps and mourns, he quakes and trembles, O but he hath no cause, because the King hath Signed and Sealed his Pardon, but this poor wretch doth not know of it; O so 'tis here, 'tis the want of assurance, that makes death so uncomfortable to many a good Christian, therefore,

4. And lastly by way of exhortation, O seek after assurance, would you live above the fears of death, labor for assurance that your names are written in the Book of Life, 2. Cor. 5. 8. Why so? because of assurance, verse 1. we know we are assured; O how willingly doth a poor Soul cast of this little tenement of his body, that is assured of Heavenly and Eternal Mansions.

This makes him smile in the face of Death, and laugh at the King of Terrors. O Friends, would you upon your Death Beds, when all your Kindred, Friends, and Neighbours stand weeping about, you laugh in the midst of them; get this assurance; sin brought us weeping into the World, assurance will carry us rejoicing out of the World. O Brethren, when once you have got this assurance (with-

out

out it you may dye happily but not chearfully) you will be looking out for Christ and for Death, you will be crying out as *Sisera's* Mother, why is death so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of Christ's Charriots; *ejus est timere mortem qui ad Christum nolit ire*, O but he that is certain of his going to Christ, how doth he cry after him, come Lord Jesu, come quickly; make hast my beloved and be thou like to the Roe, or the young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices.

And thus we have answered the Scruples of the Godly about this particular, not all but some of the chiefeſt of them. Now we come ſecondly to the,

2. Objections of the wicked or their Arguments, whereby they ſeek to blind their own Souls, or rather the Devil blinds them, thinking that they are free from this ſin their own Iniquity, when as yet it rules and reigns in them. And in the proſecution of this you ſhall ſee that the Godly are not more fearful and ſcrupulous, but the wicked are as willful and confident, and will not be perſuaded of the ſadneſs of their eſtate and conditions; and to this purpoſe they have many Arguments

ments to plead for themselves (or rather against themselves) we will examine some of them and answer them.

1. Plea.

They say they are free from all sin; sure they have no Iniquity, why so? why, there is no body can charge them with doing any thing amiss, there is no man can say black is their eye; sure if they had any sin some body or other would find them out, and tax them, and charge them with it.

Answer.

1. Remember what I told you in the discovery of the policy and mystery of this our own Iniquity, this is one piece of sins policy to lye close and lurk secretly in the heart, and to keep it self from the eyes of men, and by this policy it keeps possession in many mens hearts. Brethren, if every man would deal faithfully in discovering what is in his heart, the best of us all might hang down our heads; what saith the Prophet *David*, a man sure as
right-

righteous, and as good a Saint as any now living, 19. *Psalm* 12. why saith he, I my self cannot tell all the wickedness that is in me, much less can others. I have many secret sins that never any eye of man yet discovered; what dost thou think now sinner, do all men acquit *David* and yet will not *David* acquit himself? how do you or any of us all think to acquit ourselves then? What saith the Apostle, 1 *John* 1. 8. if every body in the World should say that I have no sin, yet if I my self should say so, I should be a lyer for my pains.

2. Perhaps others may see sin in thee though they do not tell thee of it. A man's own Iniquity is like a man's eye, to tell a man of it 'tis to thrust a pin in his eye. O there be few or none dare tell thee so whatever they think. And Brethren, by the way note this, that 'tis the great sin of us all, that we are loath to tell one another of our sins; we are afraid of reproving for fear of angering; what a sad thing is this? we had rather let our Brethren go to Hell than anger them. Another reason why we are loath to tell others of their sins, is, for fear they should tell

us of our sins; if we tell them of one sin they will check us by another sin. Observe that story in the Gospel, 8. *John* 3, 4, 5. well but what follows, 7, 9. verses; first you see they acknowledg their duty; *Moses* commanded them to stone her, yet because they were either guilty of the same sin or worse, they go their way and let her alone; *veniam petimusque damusque vicissim*; this is let me alone, and I'll let thee alone, don't check me for my sin, and I'll not reprove thee for thy sin, this is our common practice, we ruine one anothers Souls by it. O Brethren, do not trust to this, when others do not tell you of your faults, think never the better of your selves for it; be of *Dauids* mind, 141. *Psalms* 5.

3. What though all the World should acquit you, yet if God condemn you what will you get by it; God can spy a sin where man can see no sin. A man may conceal his sins as well as his Estate from men. Now what good will it do me, that all my Neighbours shall take me to be very rich; when I know that I am not worth one groat. O Brethren, this will be poor comfort for you

at the day of Judgment; if you can plead nothing but this, that all your Neighbours or all the Country speak well of you. Remember this, that God will not call a Jury of your Neighbours to try you by at the day of Judgment. And though you have deceived men, yet you cannot deceive an All-seeing God; that saying of our Saviour is true in this sense also, wo to us, not only when all men speak well of us, but speak well to us, 6. *Luk.* 26. he is our best Friend that tells us the worst of our condition. If a man come to any of you and say, Sir, there is a spot of dirt upon your face, you will say I thank you for it; but if a man tell you of your Lying, Swearing, Drunkenness, Cozening and the like; the Spots of your Souls, you are presently angry. O sirs know this, that though men never tell you of your sins, one day you shall hear of them. And what will you get by this though all the men of the World try you up now for Saints, if God at last fling you into Hell among the Devils for sinners.

2. Plea.

O but others will say, sure we are upright before God, and have kept our selves from our own Iniquities, for our Consciences did never yet check us for any sin, and as long as we have good Consciences what need we fear; sure if it were so that we were guilty of this sin, or did nourish it, Conscience would smite us for it, though no body else would tell us of it.

Answer.

1. As to the former, no man accuseth you of any sin, it doth not thence follow that no man can accuse you of any sin; so here you say your Conscience doth not accuse you, O it follows not, that therefore your Conscience cannot accuse you; there be many vile Persons in the World, whose Consciences never yet smote them for many sins that they committed, it doth not therefore follow that they never committed them, you must know this, that Conscience

doth not speak always ; some mens Consciences are like some Devils we read of in the Gospel, they were dumb Devils, so there are dumb Consciences : Nay, and where Conscience doth sometimes speak, sometimes it holds its tongue. An example in *David*, when *David* cut the lap of *Saul's* Garment, 'tis said his heart smote him, there Conscience spake, 1 *Sam.* 24. 5. but when *David* had committed those two great sins of Murder and Adultery, 'tis not said then that *David's* heart smote him, no he lay a whole Year in that sin without any remorse of Conscience at all, till the Prophet *Nathan* came and reproved him for it. Divines they tell us that great sins do *vastare conscientiam*, they fear and harden the Conscience that so it speaks not at all. O Brethren, be afraid of your selves when you sin, and your Consciences let you alone and never tell you of them.

2. Again you say, Conscience never yet accused you for any sin, it doth not follow that therefore Conscience will never accuse you, nay rather thus you must think, that Conscience hath a long reckoning

knowing with you, Conscience hath the more against you, and it will call you to an account for all at last. Conscience is like a Shop-keeper, you take up Wares at your Mercer or Grocer, &c. he asks you never a penny, you send for more and more still, he asks you no money, O but all this while, he writes down all in his Book, and there must be a pay day at last; so thou sinnest, Conscience says nothing, thou sinnest again and again, Conscience still holds its peace, O but Conscience is all this while a writing, sets down every particular sin, and this Book of Conscience will assuredly be brought as a Witness against you at the last day. And therefore saith one, though Conscience be not always speaking, yet 'tis always Writing. O sinner tremble at this, I may say almost the same to you, that Saint *James* saith to rich men, 5. *James* 1, 2, 3. rich men, O they think 'tis a merry World while they are hoarding and treasuring up their riches, and gold, and silver, and none to contradict or oppose them; O but saith the Apostle they would howl if they did but know

the miseries that shall come upon them, and what they are treasuring up for the last days; so sinners you may think it now a brave and a merry World, you can sin at your liberty, be drunk day after day, swear oath after oath, and cozen one man to day another to morrow, lye and forswear and speak as you list, and do as you list, and live as you list, and none to contradict you, your Consciences hold their peace and say not a word to you, O but tremble and howl to consider, what an hoard a treasure of sins you are heaping up together against the last day the day of Judgment. O sinners you that say your Consciences never yet did smite you for any sin, do not trust to that, Conscience will deal by you as *Absalom* by his Brother *Amnon*, 2 *Sam.* 13. 22. mark what follows v. 23, 28. so Conscience, &c.

3. Once more, you say Conscience did never accuse you, but let me ask you one Question, did ever your Consciences excuse you, or do they now excuse you, if you can say so you say somewhat to the purpose, 2. *Rom.* 15. one of these two every man's Conscience will

will do and must do, either accuse him or excuse him, and therefore if your Consciences do not excuse you, look for it, as sure as death they will one time or other accuse you; if Conscience do not witness with you, it is a sure sign that it will witness against you, do not boast or rejoyce of a silent Conscience, but rather tremble and be afraid; the Apostle will tell you wherein he rejoyced and wherein you may rejoyce, 2 Cor. 1. 12. so do your Consciences witness with you, your simplicity of heart and sincerity towards God, and your carefulness in your whole lives, to walk before God with a perfect heart, and to keep your selves from your own Iniquity, in this may you truly rejoyce and have true peace and comfort; otherwise if you live in sin and your consciences smite you not, do not rejoyce, all such rejoycing is vain.

Question.

But you will say what shall we do in this case, when we do so or so and Conscience never smite us for it, how

shall we know whether it be good or bad.

Answer.

Take *Bernards* Rule in this Case, *unicuique suus liber est conscientia*, &c. & *ideo scribi debent libri nostri ad exemplar libri vite*, & *si sic scripti non sint*, *saltem corrigantur*. Go to the Law and to the Testimony, if thy Conscience speak not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in it. Conscience (as one well observes) must have its negative voice, nothing must be done without its assent and good liking, but be sure your Consciences go by the certain rule of the word of God, else you will miserably perish. And therefore *Chrysostome* doth worthily blame those who are so scrupulous in taking money, they must see the figures and look for the right stamp, but in matters of Conscience, and Points and Practices of Religion, People are not so scrupulous to examin every thing by the Scriptures, whether the stamp of God the King of Heaven be upon it. Take heed therefore

fore that you be not condemned by the Scripture God's Book, when as your Consciences lye asleep and warn you not, O be warned by the voice of God in the Bible.

4. And lastly, you say that your Consciences never smite you. O take heed of such Consciences; most People love such Ministers as will let them alone in their sins, and never thunder out Hell and Damnation against them; and so perhaps you may love such Consciences as will never smite you, reprove you for sin; O how many will say they thank God they were never troubled in Conscience for any sin all their days, O do not thank God for it, but rather Pray to God to awaken Conscience, and to open the mouth of Conscience; when Conscience lyes asleep as it were, and in a lethargie, that Soul is in a dangerous estate and near death, — *gelida est quasi mortis imago*. A speechless Conscience is the most desperate disease in the World. It is a most certain token of death approaching to the body when the speech is gone, the eyes are set in the head, feeling is lost, the pulse leaves
beat-

beating, and the excrements come away unawares, that man is drawing on to his grave; so when you see the eyes of Conscience set, feeling and sense of sin gone, heart-smiting done, and sin all manner of sin committed without the least remorse, and the Soul lies wallowing in the noysome excrements of sin and uncleanness, 'tis a sure sign that that Soul is drawing on to the Chambers of Hell.

3. Plea.

O but say others, we are not in this condition, for we cannot commit a sin, but Conscience presently smites us for it; and Conscience makes them to tremble and quake, and to look out for help, and therefore though they sin, yet are they troubled and vexed for it, and therefore sure 'tis not their own Iniquity.

Answer.

'Tis no safe way for any man to trust to the troubles of his Conscience. O
sinner

sinner do not say with *Agas*, surely the bitterness of death is past, because Conscience hath terrified thee for sin. Many are smitten by Conscience in this World, and yet shall be tormented also by it in another World. Many there are that go *ex inferno ad infernum*, out of one Hell into another, out of the horror of Conscience into the terrors of the Damned. And therefore 'tis great wisdom to distinguish between the terrors of Conscience, which are good and which not. I will lay you down some rules to judge of both.

1. Troubles of Conscience whereby a man is never the better.

1. Go to the fountain and look from whence all these troubles of Conscience arise, thus, art thou troubled because thou hast sinned and offended God thy Father, wronged Christ and put him to shame, dishonoured the Gospel, art a stumbling block to others, because sin hath defiled thee, or is it only for fear of the punishment, art thou troubled only because thou art afraid of being Damned? If so then I will shew thee what thou art in the picture of *Cain*, 4.

Gen.

Gen. 13. *Cain's* Conscience was troubled only for the punishment ; so *Ahab* a wicked Wretch he had such a troubled Conscience, *1 Kings* 21. 27. What words? see verse 21. This is to be troubled for Hell and not for Sin ; and there are many such now in Hell.

2. But suppose thou art troubled for sin, examine what sins they are that thou art most troubled for. Are they only gross, open, notorious sins that the World takes notice of? and canst thou please and delight thy self in small and secret sins? then is not thy Conscience good, and this trouble will do thee no good. Thou art troubled that men see thee, but thou art not troubled that God sees thee; see *Ahab* again, *1 Kings* 21. 20. *Ahab* was more troubled at *Elijah's* presence, he considered not that God saw him; a good Conscience will be troubled for every sin. *David's* Conscience smote him only for cutting of the Skirt of *Saul's* Garment? A man that hath a tender skin will cry out more for the prick of a little pin, than another for a wound or gash made with a sharp sword; so a man that hath a tender

tender Conscience, 13. *Heb.* 18. mark it in all things; a good Conscience will dispense with no sin.

3. Examine whether this trouble of Conscience drives thee, what doth it set thee to do for thy cure? you may know the disease sometimes by the plaster. Do these troubles drive thee to God, the only Physician of a troubled spirit, and who only hath the balm that can cure the wounds of Conscience? or dost thou take other courses that are not warrantable by the word of God? as merry boon companions or mirth, or the like, to drown these sorrows? then see thy picture, 1 *Sam.* 16. 14, 15, 16, 17. O Brethren, this is only like drinking in a droppe, easeth for the present, but makes the sick man the worse afterwards; there are many such troubled Consciences in Hell.

4. Examine the effects of this trouble. Art thou any whit reformed by it, or dost thou loath sin by it? or otherwise doth it not rather drive thee further and further into sin, O this is an ill sign, when the terrors of Conscience do not make thee make more Con-

Conscience of sin; see thy Picture once more, 24. *Acts* 25. see what effects vers. 26, 27. *Paul* leaves *Felix* as he found him, and *Felix* leaves *Paul* as he found him. His trembling fit did not make him at all afraid of sin; there are many such troubled Consciences in Hell.

2. Troubles of Conscience when a man is better by them.

You may know this partly by opposition to what hath been said. I will only lay down a few particulars briefly.

1. When the Soul is troubled only for the sin committed, when his sin is a greater burden to him than Hell it self, when he mourns only for sin, 5. *Lam.* 16. 13. *Job* 26.

2. When the Soul is more careful to wash away the spot, and the stain and filth of sin, than to be freed from the punishment of sin, 51. *Psal.* 2. 7. like a cleanly man that is fallen into the dirt, he is never quier till he hath shifted himself and put on clean cloaths, a floven if he fall into the dirt cares not if he be not hurt.

3. When the Soul is more careful ever after of running into the same sin again,

again, 34. *Job.* 31, 32. No faith such a Soul, if it please God I will have no more to do with sin, when such a Soul will not be tempted to sin for the gain of a Kingdom; when Conscience thus smites a man. 'tis like the wounds of a friend, which are far better than the kisses of an enemy.

4. Plea.

But what say others! O we pray and read the Scriptures and hear Sermons, keep up duties in our Families, and good orders, and frequent the Ordinances, surely we are purged from our Iniquities; none under the power of sin do as we do.

Answer.

1. In the words of our Saviour, what do you more than others? do not even the Hypocrites the same? they run to Sermons, they thrust themselves to Sacraments, they read Chapters, and pray in their Families, they keep a clean outside. Hypocrites are as much in these duties

duties as any, and the reasons of it are these.

1. That they may have somewhat to boast of, and therefore this is always an Hypocrites note to boast of his duties. I fast twice in the Week &c. and I do so or so; whereas a true Saint is even ashamed of his best duties, and flings them away as rags; the Hypocrite he seeks his own glory in duties, a true Saint seeks only God's Glory, and that's the reason he performs duties at all.

2. That they may by these outward duties, cloak and cover their inward lusts and corruptions, hide their beloved sins; hence our Saviour calls them gilded and painted Sepulchres, 30. *Prov.* 20. so the Hypocrite after he hath slyly committed a sin, then he wipes his mouth with some Heavenly Speeches or Prayers or the like, and O then he passeth for a Saint; whereas a sincere heart he performs duties to get rid of sin, the Hypocrite he performs duties thereby to keep his sins.

3. That they may have somewhat to trust unto and to rest upon. All the hope

hope and confidence ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ the Hypocrite is in what he hath done ; whereas a true Saints confidence is only in what Christ hath done for him ; you shall see both these ; what doth the Hypocrite plead at the day of Judgment ? see 13. *Luke* 26. his duties. But what is a true Saints confidence then ? only Christ's merits and righteousness, 3. *Phil.* 8, 9.

2. A man may do all these duties and yet live under the power of sin. A man may pray against sin and yet delight in sin. Are there not many among us, too many that say over the Lords Prayer every day, yea some many times in a day, Hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, yet continue to be Swearers, Drunkards, scoffers at Holiness, and Sabbath-breakers, yea and delight in these sins ? and what more contrary ? Again some will speak against those very sins that they love best, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3, 4. while *Absalom* was there railing against injustice, he was then plotting the greatest peace of wrong and injustice, in taking away his Fathers Kingdom from him. As our Ranters, that
Q will

will sit drinking of healths so long till they have quite drank away their own health; so many do even harden themselves in their sins by their holy duties, when they do pray one ways, and their hearts are set the other ways, O how loath are they that God should hear their Prayers; Saint *Austin* confesseth that before his conversion he prayed for chastity, yet was afraid, (as he writes of himself,) least God should hear his Prayers too soon, for he was not yet willing to part with his lusts; so do many perform duties, only out of formality and custom, not that they have any desire to be rid of their sins.

3. Duties performed where the life is not reformed will but harden a man's heart the more in sin. *Tundens pectus, & non corrigens vitia, illa consolidat. Aug.* Hence is that of our Saviour, 21. *Mat.* 31. latter part, these Persons are the furthest from Conversion, therefore,

4. That you may not on the one side be discouraged from Holy Duties, nor on the other side be deceived and deluded by them, labour after the power of Godliness in your hearts; set your selves
to

to be Christians indeed, and then these duties will be great helps to you. Do not make these duties all your Religion, but only means to further you in the ways of Holiness; labour for a pure heart, then will God accept of your duties; say of all these duties as *Haman* of all his honours, 5. *Esther* 11, 12, 13. I am one that enjoy great priviledges, am Baptized into the name of Christ, partake of the Ordinances of Christ, sit under the means of grace, perform all Holy Duties, but what will all this avail me, as long as I see this *Mordecai* my own Iniquity sitting in my heart and ruling there. O Beloved, this is the duty of duties, the main duty of all to purge out sin, labour for a sincere heart, else all your duties will be to no purpose, 66. *Psalms* 18. and then,

5. And lastly, a word to those that perform no duties at all, that have no Praying or Reading the Scriptures in their Families, no frequenting the Ordinances, and fighting the means of grace, if there be many that do these things that shall go to Hell; O what will become of you that come far short

of them that come short of Heaven :
1 Pet. 4. 18. if they that have the form
 of Godliness must to Hell, where shall
 your place think ye be in Hell; that
 are the very pictures of Atheism and
 Profaneness: O think of this and labour
 to be better and to do better. O you
 that call your selves Christians, do not
 live like so many swine in their sties, on-
 ly to eat and drink and sleep, but live
 to God, and honour God, and serve God
 in your houses, and then the blessing of
 God shall be upon your Families.

5. Plea.

O but say some we have reformed
 our selves, and have left many of our sins
 and of our evil courses, and we are now
 more out with sin, than ever we were in
 our lives.

Answer.

1. You say you are reformed; but
 how? why you have left many sins.
 Is it so? that's a good beginning, but
 you must not stay and rest there, your
 work

work is not done. This is just as if a man whose arm is gangrened, cuts off all his fingers, that will not save his life for the gangrene is higher up in his arm; so for a man to leave only some sins, and to suffer the domineering heart rotting sin still to abide, this will not keep that man out of Hell. *Herod* did many things yet a Reprobate, *Agrippa* was almost persuaded to be a Christian, yet a cast-away; you may do the like and be in their condition; and therefore I will lay down a few particulars to be considered by you.

1. There is no sinner in the World but abstains from some sins, yea hates some sins; go to the Covetous man, and ask him to go to the Tavern and there to revel it and spend his money, O he will tell you he cannot endure this drinking and tipling, 'tis an offence to God to spend and waste our Estates so vainly; go to the Drunkard and tell him of Covetousness, O he cannot endure this hoarding up of money, he loves to spend it freely, 2. *Rom. 21.* latter part. *Julias* a covetous Wretch, he pleads for Charity to the Poor, 12.

John 3, 4, 5, 6. if the leaving of some sins, or the hating of some sins would make a man a Saint, all the World would be Saints.

2. When the Scripture gives us the Character of a true Saint, it doth not describe him by leaving of such or such particular sins; but by forsaking sin in the general; 1. *Job* 1. he eschewed evil, *i.e.* he avoided every sin; so repentance is a turning from every sin, 26. *Acts* 18. every sin is darkness, now if a man turn from every sin but one, yet he cannot be said to turn from darkness, because that sin is darkness; take a piece of cloath that hath twenty spots of dirt, and wash away nineteen of them, yet you cannot say that cloath is clean, why because there is a spot of dirt in it; no more can you say that man is a Saint, that reforms many things if he live but in one sin.

3. Those that have reformed many sins, yet they must repent of the rest, and turn from them: too if they hope ever to find mercy; Christ will never own us, while we do own the least Iniquity. Observe but the Message of Christ
sends

sends to the Church of *Pergamus*, 2. *Rev.* 12, 13. why was not all this well, but mark further, 14, 15. O but you will say, this is not so great a matter, as long as she had so many good things in her, therefore hear what Christ saith to her verse 16. O saith Christ, all this will not do unless thou repent of this sin also; so Beloved say I to you, you that have left many sins that formerly you were guilty off, all this will not do unless you leave every sin; should a man that is a Swearer come and tell me he was formerly a Drunkard, but he hath left that, a Lyar, but he hath left that, a despiser of Ordinances, but now he frequents them and many more; O but hast thou left thy Swearing too? else all is nothing; look once more into your hearts, is there any sin behind, repent of that, turn that out also, else all is to no purpose.

2. You say you have reformed your selves in many things, and have left many sins, let us a little examine this reformation, 'tis to be feared 'tis no sound true reformation, look to the bottom, and you will find it very dirty there, and

the reason is this, because he that truly hates one sin, will upon the same account hate every sin ; true reformation routs out every sin.

Now there be two Questions that will resolve this case.

Question.

1. What are the sins thou art reformed from ? Answer truly to this Question.

1. Are they not only some small petty sins that thou never madest any great matter of, thou never tookest any great delight in ; but still retainest thy great and best beloved and delightful sins. This is to do just like *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15.

3. God bids him destroy all the *Amalekites*, spare none of them saith God, well what doth *Saul*, see verse the 9th. he spareth *Agag* and the best of the Cattel notwithstanding ; just so thou serveest God, God bids thee part with every sin, no thou wilt spare the best.

2. Are they not only those sins, that cross thy designs or hinder thy preferment in the World, 2 *Kings* 12. 2. *Je-*
hoash

hoasb could willingly have set up Idolatry, as appears by what he did afterwards, O but he was but young, and he durst not anger *Jehoiada* the Priest, for fear of loosing his Kingdom; so when Religion is in fashion, O many a man will leave his sins if he see they hinder his preferment. A Godly Man hath a Wicked Son, he tells him, if he leave not his idle courses, he will disinherit him, for fear of loosing an Estate, have many left their sinful courses.

3. Are they not such sins, gross Iniquities, that all the Country would cry shame upon thee if thou didst not leave them. O how many are there that leave their sins, just as they leave their old cloaths, because they are out of fashion? sinners love to be singular in nothing, no not in sinning, if they have not companions in their sins, they will leave them.

4. Are they not such sins as have first left you; just as some are fain to leave off their cloaths, because they have out grown them, so many have out grown their sins; the Drunkard is taken sick
and

and lame, he cannot go to the Ale-house as formerly, and so he hath left that sin, 'tis time, the Adulterer his body is quite worn out, he cannot do as formerly, and so he hath left that sin because he cannot commit it. Alas Brethren, if this be all your reformation it is altogether unsound and good for nothing.

Question.

2. What kind of reformation is this? you may know it by these particulars.

1. Is it only an outward reformation, a reforming of the life and not of the heart, a reforming of the actions and not of the affections? if so 'tis not right, true conversion always begins at the heart; that man's life can never be good if his heart be not good; this is just like *Lot's Wife leaving of Sodom*, 19. *Gen.* 26. This is *Simon Magus* repentance, 8. *Acts* 21.

2. Is this a reformation only of passion, and not of sound reason and judgment; dost thou only leave sin in an anger, or a passionate fit, and not out
of

of a due and serious consideration of the evil of it, and the deadly nature of it. This is just like *Saul's* reformation, 1 *Sam.* 28. 3, 7. *Saul* put away the Witches only in an angry mood, and afterwards seeks to them again. No, no, true and serious repentance is wrought by serious deliberation; he that leaves his sin only in an anger, when his anger is over will to it again. As furious Gamesters, in an anger will fling up their cards and dice, and swear they will play no more, when their anger is over, perhaps the very next day they are at it again; so do many deal with sin; true reformation is a deliberate work, and always hath conviction and humiliation going before.

3. Is this reformation only a leaving of sin and not an hating of sin. 'Tis true, thou dost thrust sin out of doors, but thou canst not say thou art angry with it: Alas this is but like a Land-flood 'twill not last long. *David* Banished his Son *Absalom*, but he was not angry with him, and see what follows, 2 *Sam.* 13. 34. if thou deal so with sin, thy Soul will ere long desire and long for

for this thine *Absalom* again ; true repentance is with anger and indignation in the heart against sin , 2. *Cor.* 7. 11. just like *Ephraim*, how angry is he, 14. *Hosea.* 8.

4. Is thy reformation only a turning from sin , and not a turning to God ; 'tis not enough to hate sin, but we must love holiness, to leave sin but we must cleave to God ; we must love Christ as much as formerly we loved sin, else the leaving of sin only is but an half repentance, an half reformation, 1 *Thess.* 1. 9. 12. *Rom.* 9. 1. *Isaiah* 16, 17. O how many are there that are grown cold in the ways of sin , but yet are never the hotter in the ways of Christ, these Persons are Neuters, they are neither for *Baal* nor for the Lord of Hosts ; O if we do not take in both these parts, our reformation is no true, sound, perfect reformation ; and therefore boast not of it, nor deceive your selves by it ; if you are no better reformed, you shall never be saved.

6. Plea.

O but say others, sure we are those that are free from our own Iniquities, for we cannot endure the least Iniquity in others; we are no Hypocrites for we cannot endure Hypocrites.

Answer.

1. If censuring, and judging, and finding fault with others would make true Saints, we should have enough of them now-a-days; the World is full of such Persons like the *Lamia*, those Witches that (as it is reported of them) carried their eyes with them on their fore-heads, when they went abroad to spy faults in others, but put them into boxes when they came at home, that they might see none in themselves. Mr. *Greenham* calls them the Devils Registers, that look after other mens sins. A wicked man may hate the same sin in another, that he loves in himself; witness *Jehu* that hated *Ahabs* Idolatry, but yet was an Idolater himself; 2
Kings

Kings 10. 28, 29. so we read of *Joab* a wicked man, yet he could reprove *David* for a sin, 2 *Sam.* 24. 2, 3. if this be all thou canst plead, thou mayst be ill enough for all this.

2. I add further, that 'tis the very sign of an Hypocrite and a naughty heart to be angry with others for sin, and not to be angry with our selves for sin; the old Proverb is true, Whores will call Whores first. These Persons they do the Devils work, for he is still accusing one or other before God, when he is the worst of all himself.

3. If we would deal uprightly with sin, let us follow the Gospel Rules in this case, and they are two.

1. In judging and censuring let us ply that work at home; the directions that the Apostle gives to the Wife, may well serve in this case, that the Wife ought to keep at home; so in judging Christians ought to keep at home, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. 'Tis our selves we must judge and censure, and the more the better; but we must not go abroad, 14. *Rom.* 10. and 4. *James* 12. 'tis dangerous meddling here.

2. In

2. In reprovig or reforming, we must first begin at home and afterwards go abroad ; 'tis our Saviours own Rule, 7. *Matth.* 3, 4, 5. we ought to be good examples to others ; and then we might spare reproofs, our very lives would better serve the turn. *Tibi ipsi esto durus nunquam alius Bern.* This Brethren, is the best way to save our selves and others, to destroy our own sins, and others will be thereby provoked the better to leave their Iniquities. Christ compares his Disciples to Salt ; that is savoury in it self, and savours all other things, a Christians savoury life makes others to relish Godliness the better ; again he compares them to lights, now a Godly life is not only shining in it self, but directs others the way, therefore if we would glorifie God let us look to our selves, and if we would provoke others to holiness, let us follow it our selves, 5. *Mat.* 16.

7. Plea.

O but say others, we are not those that make a meer profession, our good
works

works are to be seen. Our Saviour tells us the tree is known by his fruits, and grapes are not gathered of thorns, nor figs of thistles.

Answer.

1. 'Tis the surest sign of a Saint (as far as we can judge) to be fruitful in good works, and yet an Hypocrite, he may also imitate a Saint in these likewise and deceive the World; did not the *Pharisees* which were Hypocrites give much Alms, were liberal to the Poor; did not *Saul* a wicked King slay all the Witches and Wizards; *Jehu* destroyed *Baal*; the unjust judge avenge the poor Widow of her Adversaries; were not all these good works as to the matter of them, and yet the Persons that did them wicked: therefore,

2. We must look to the Qualifications of them. Now there are several qualifications required in good works to make them good in the sight of God, which can be found in none but true Saints. As,

1. They must proceed from a good heart

heart, 12. *Matthew* 33. so 8. *Luke* 15. God looks to the goodness of the heart, if our hearts be naught; God will never tast of the fruit we bear. That's the root.

2. The tree must belong to Christ, or else he will never own the fruit; the Woman is first Married, and then she bares Children; else what she bring forth before Marriage are not legitimate; so all our good things before united to Christ, &c. therefore the Fathers call all the vertues and good works of the Heathens, *splendida peccata*, only because they did not belong to Christ. Nay Christ tells us, that none out of him can do any thing acceptable unto God, 15. *John* 4. Look that you belong to Christ.

3. For the fruit it self. These qualifications.

1. They must be done in Faith. He that hath no Faith cannot please God. Faith that ripens all our fruits else they will tast very raw.

2. In Charity. 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. without charity i.e. a true love to God and Holiness, all our fruits will tast sower.

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3. Our

3. Our good fruits must bear proportion.

1. To our former bad fruits, 6. *Rom.* 19. we must do as much for God as formerly for our selves, or the Devil, or sin, or lusts.

2. To the Soil we are planted in, *i.e.* to the means of grace we live under, 92. *Psalms* 13, 14. God expects more from us than from others; less would carry a man to Heaven formerly than now, because we have more means than they.

4. We must look especially that our aim and end be good, or else our works cannot be good, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. Now if such be our fruits, then may I say to you in the words of the Apostle, 6. *Rom.* 22. Now are ye made free from sin, and become servants unto God, and ye have your fruit unto Holiness, and the end shall be everlasting life.

3. Motives together with means and directions.

1. Motives.

Though the several reasons of the Doctrine laid down already might serve as so many strong convincing motives against this sin, yet because it is a sin of so much delight to us, and of so much difficulty to get rid of it. I will add a few words more by way of motive to persuade you to this duty.

1. Keep your selves from this sin, because 'tis a beloved sin; this hath been proved already in the Doctrinal part, that 'tis the sin that we love most dearly. Now if it be so, a sin that we love therefore let us cast it out; this is the Gospel Rule, if ever we would be happy, we must love that which we naturally hate, and hate that which we naturally love. A natural man hates the light and loves darkness, hates God, loves the World, hates Christ, loves sin, now if ever this man be saved he must be brought to this, to hate what he
R 2 loved,

loved, and to love what he hated ; he must love the light and hate darkness, he must love God and hate the World, he must love Christ and hate sin. Now here lies the strength of the motive, if there be any sin that we love we must hate it, cast it out because 'tis beloved of us ; 'tis our love to this sin, that makes this sin stick and cleave so close and so fast to us, 8. *Cantic.* 7. so may we say here many waters, many tears, yea whole rivers and floods of Repentance can scarce drown our beloved sin.

Here are three things especially to move us to cast out this sin upon this very account that 'tis our beloved sin.

1. We love it ; what love sin ? do you know what you do when you love sin ? sin is communion with the Devil, and do you love communion with the Devil ? there is none of you all but would be ready to spit in my face, if I should tell you you love the Devil, and you love his company ; why yes, if you love any sin you love communion with the Devil. Our Saviour calls sin *ἡ συνουσία τοῦ διαβόλου*, 8. *John* 44. *peculiariter*

liariter dicit? de amatoria cupidine. Scapula. Now the Devil he loves sin, and if you love sin too, here is your communion with the Devil; what saith the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 10. 20. He that worships an Idol as the Heathens did, he hath fellowship with Devils; he that loves any sin sets up an Idol in his heart, and serves and worships this sin as much as the Heathens did their Idols, therefore he hath fellowship with Devils; you see what it is to love sin; to keep a beloved sin in ones heart, is to have fellowship and communion with Devils; all the Devils in Hell, riot, and feast, and make merrry in that man's heart. Are you not afraid of this, O then let this be an Argument to cast out this sin, because 'tis a beloved sin.

2. If we love any sin we cannot love Christ, this sin will make us leave him and forsake him. *Judas* his beloved sin made him betray Christ, O what an horrid thing was that; and Brethren, are there not many *Judasses* in the World, that will betray Christ to satisfie their beloved sin. Every man that hath a

beloved sin in his heart, is a very *Judas* in his heart to Christ, let Christ and his sin stand in competition, and you shall see that man will be the greatest enemy to Christ, 3. *Philip.* 18. but who were these, see verse 19. here were their Gods their beloved bellies, and their beloved earthly things, their beloved sins, these were Christ's enemies, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. what's the reason *Demas* forsook Christ, why his beloved sin made him, he loved the World; what saith Christ, 6. *Matth.* 24. so is the case here between Christ and Sin; he that loves sin hates Christ, and he that loves Christ hates sin; the reason of this is plain, Christ comes to destroy sin, therefore he that loves sin cannot endure Christ, and sin that dishonours Christ, therefore he that loves Christ cannot but hate sin. Christ and Sin are like *Cæsar* and *Pompey* — *nec ferre partem Cæsarve priorem Pompeiusve parem* — sin will not endure Christ to be above it, and Christ will not endure sin to be equal with him. Now here's a tryal of your love, are you resolved to love sin, then you must part with Christ: are you re-

solved

solved to love Christ, then you must part with your beloved sin; consider seriously of this, whether a beloved sin will countervail your loss of Christ.

3. We cannot honour Christ better, than by parting with our beloved sin; O the Lord Jesus will take this very kindly at our hands; when a man shall say, Lord I have a sin, a lust within me, that I love most dearly, 'tis my darling O I take great pleasure and delight in it, 'tis not all the World shall make me part with it, but Lord at thy command I leave it, rather than I will offend thee I will have no more to do with it, yea rather than I will not love thee, I will hate even my beloved sin. O Brethren, Christ will take this wery kindly at our hands; O that every one of us could say so! as the Martyr said when he was wished to recant and save his life, no faith he, if every hair on my head were a life, I would lay them all down for the sake of my Lord Christ, so should we say, if every hair on our heads were a beloved sin, we would part with them all for the sake of Christ. Here is a true sign of an upright heart, and there

is no other sign of it, for a man to leave other sins it signifieth little or nothing, but when it comes to our beloved sin, whether we will part with our *Benjamin* or no, herein will our love to Christ be tryed, 22. *Gen.* 11, 12. so will Christ say, O my dear Soul, now I know that thou lovest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy sin, thine only sin, thy beloved sin, but hast even parted with that for my sake. O Brethren, you will shew more love to Christ, and respect to Christ in parting with this one sin, than with a thousand other sins. And thus you see there is great reason, why we should keep our selves from our own sin, upon this account, because 'tis our beloved sin.

2. A Second Motive is this.

This sin our own Iniquity, is the only thing that hinders the making up the match between Christ and our Souls, were it not for this Christ, and we should quickly agree and close together, without more ado; the sinner stands upon this Lord spare me in this one thing,
no

no Christ will not bate thee this one sin. O Soul hearken to this, and if thou go to Hell at last, when thou art in Hell remember this word, that 'tis only this one sin that keeps thee from Christ and Christ from thee. Thou wilt not accept of Christ; why? because thou wilt not part with this sin; and Christ will not accept of thee; why? because thou wilt not part with this sin. O but perhaps thou wilt say, I have many sins more; why let not that trouble thee; Christ will accept of thee with all thine infirmities, if thou wilt but part with thine Iniquities, *II. Matth. 28.* if thou art weary of sin, go to Christ he will ease thee, hast thou thousands of sins, if thou disown them, Christ will never disown thee for them. Here Brethren, is all the pinch when a man will own sin, and love sin, and keep and maintain sin, that's the Soul that will not close with Christ; come then sinners let us examine the case a little; what is there between Christ and you, let us try whether we can reconcile you together or no; come sinners speak, what is it that Christ would have you do? why 'tis

'tis only this to keep your selves from your own Iniquities; well, and what's the reason you will not do this? why will you not part with your sins? O do not stand with Christ for so small a matter as a sin; O let it never be said that a sin parted you and Christ, that a sin kept you out of Heaven; why, do in this case as in other cases of lesser moment, put it to reference, and choose whom you will to umpire between you and Christ.

1. Let reason decide the controversie,
 1. *Isaiah* 18. Christ you see is willing to stand to this. Hear then what reason will determine in this case; doth not reason tell us, than an Estate of an Hundred Pound *per annum* is worth more than a shilling? again reason tells us, that poyson though it be never so sweet and pleasant to the tast, is not good because 'twill kill us; doth not reason tell us, that a living Dog is better than a dead Lion; doth not reason judge that man a fool, who lying in Prison in a nasty Dungeon, will not have his liberty when 'tis offered? Is not this thy case O sinner, reason it self condemns thee,

thee, when thou wilt part with Heaven for a sin, and poyson thy Soul with sin, because 'tis sweet and pleasant to thy corrupt nature ; to esteem more of a dead pleasure than a living Christ ; and when thou art so freely offered liberty by Christ, to have thy fetters and shackles of sin knockt off, that thou wilt choose rather to lye rotting in that stinking Dungeon of Hell to all Eternity. Brethren, if you will but stand to reason that will cast you. But perhaps you will say reason may err, therefore,

2. Chuse you an Infallable Judge, and that's the word of God, O let that be umpire between thee and Christ ; hear what the Scripture saith, *18. Mat. 8, 9. 8. Mark 36.* what can be more plain than this? Brethren, if you will but read the Scriptures and stand to their determination, they are infallable and will not deceive you, you will not stand out for a sin any longer ; but perhaps you will say of the Scriptures, as *Ahab* of *Micajah*, they speak not good concerning you but evil, therefore,

3. We will chuse another umpire, a
bosom

bosom friend of yours; and that is your own Conscience, refer the business to Conscience, and stand to what your own Conscience shall determine. Hear what Conscience saith, 13. *Job* 26. *Job's* Conscience told him, that sin was a bitter Pill, a thing not to be beloved, 38. *Psalms* 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. so will Conscience, read you the same lesson if you would but appeal to it. And let me mind you of one thing; though you will not hearken to the voice of reason, nor to the voice of the word, yet you must hearken to the voice of Conscience either sooner or later, if you slight it now 'twill roar against you another day; do but consider the case of *Judas*, 27. *Matth.* 3, 4, 5. *Judas* might have argued thus before, what shall I be such a fool to leave Christ for thirty pence, O but he goes on without Scripture Reason and Conscience, and after 'twas done, O what an Hell was Conscience to him, it drags him first before the Chief Priests, and there Conscience condemns him, it drags him next to the Gallows, and there Conscience executes him, and after that it drags his Soul to Hell, and there

there Conscience torments him to all Eternity. You see Brethren, what *Judas* got by his sin, O there is none of you but will be ready to say, better *Judas* had parted with his sin, than with his Saviour; in condemning *Judas* you condemn your selves, you that stand with Christ for one sin, for one lust, mark, this^{sin} will serve you at last as *Judas's* sin served him, if you leave it not 'twill bring you to Hell.

3. A Third Motive is this.

Consider how long God and Christ have waited upon you for this one thing, for the mortifying of this your own Iniquity. Reckon up how long you have lived, first how many Years, then how many Months, then how many Weeks, then how many Days, then how many Hours, then how many Minutes God hath so long waited upon thee; every Year, every Month, every Week, every Day, every Hour, nay every Minute thou hast deserved to be cast into Hell for this thine Iniquity, remember that God hath spared thee all this while to try

try whether thou wilt cast off thy sin or no ; again reckon the Ordinances, Sermons, Sabbaths, and the means of grace that God hath afforded thee, and all this while God hath waited upon thee in every Ordinance, in every Sermon and every Sabbath, to try whether thou wouldst repent of this thine Iniquity. Reckon again all God's Providences towards thee, such a time thou wert sick, and Death lookt in at thy Chamber Window, the Devil was ready to draw the curtains to carry thee away to Hell, but God spared thee, and raised thee up again, and ever since hath waited on thee for the casting away of this thine own Iniquity ; such a time thou wert in danger to be drowned, such a time in danger of breaking thy neck by a fall, such a time in danger of killing by such or such men, and yet thou art still alive to read these lines or hear them read, remember that all this while, God hath been waiting on thee for the leaving of this thine Iniquity. God speaks to every one of us as he did to *Jerusalem*, 13. *Jer.* 27. I have seen saith God thy sins all this while, do not think

think that thou art not punished because I know not thine Iniquities, O but I have waited all this while to have thee cleansed, and now *Jerusalem* when wilt thou be clean? what have I waited so long, and thou art not clean yet? O when shall it once be? so saith God to us, what sinners do you think I have not yet waited long enough upon you, and what are not your Iniquities gone yet? I have seen them all this while, O what will become of you? look what became of those on whom God waited long and would not repent, the old World, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19, 20. they are now in Prison, in Hell for it; *Jezebel* 2. *Revel.* 21, 22. And what shall become of us if we abuse his patience, see 2. *Rom.* 4, 5.

4. A Fourth Motive is this.

Consider what gracious offers the Lord makes to thee if thou wilt but part with this sin. God doth not only persuade us, but he doth wager us also to part with our sins; shall I tell you what God offers, why part with this sin, you shall

shall have Christ, the spirit of Christ, the graces of Christ, the promises of Christ, the Kingdom of Christ, the Crown of Christ, the Glory of Christ, and the Company of Christ to all Eternity. Ah Christians, throw away your beloved sins, and all these shall be yours, 8. *Rom.* 13. there's the duty what follows verse 14. what then verse 17. so 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. *i.e.* such as keep themselves from their Iniquity, for the spirit of God never enters in till this sin be cast out, well what then, verses 21, 22, 23. the Scripture is full of promises to this purpose. But what can be said more? he that hath Christ hath all things, what ever he can desire, 84. *Psalms* 111. O that God should wager us to be sincere and upright, and yet we still remain willful and obstinate! we have not only precept upon precept to leave this sin, but we have also promise upon promise if we will leave it. O what sots, what bruits are we, if we should esteem of this sin before all the promises of the Gospel, the riches of grace, and the glories of Heaven. O sinner, let me speak plainly to thee, what wouldst thou

thou have God to do for thee? to carry thee to Heaven with this sin in thy heart, I tell thee God will not do it, yea (with reverence be it spoken) God cannot do it. 21. *Revel.* 27. what hath not God staked down sufficient against a single sin? wouldst thou have God to bid more? he hath given us his Son already, and with him hath freely granted all good things to us? what wouldst thou have more? wouldst thou be more glorious than God can make thee? more secure than Heaven can make thee? more rich than Christ can make thee? more joyful than the Holy Spirit the Comforter can make thee? and more blessed than all the promises of the Gospel can make thee? Well sinner if all this will not persuade thee to part with thy sin, I have done, keep it still, go to Hell with it, and try what markets thou canst make there.

5. A Fifth Motive is this.

Consider the several aggravations of this sin; should I reckon them up'twould make your very hairs to stand an end;
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and your joynts to tremble ; well I will shew them to you, that you may see I have not been so long upon this Text, perswading you from this sin to no purpose.

Aggravations of this sin called our own Iniquity.

1. 'Tis a sin against light, sins of ignorance cannot properly be called our own Iniquities, but that sin is our Iniquity, which though we know it to be a sin, yet for some pleasure or profit or the like, we still retain it. This aggravation heightens it above that horrid sin of the *Jews* in Crucifying Christ, 3. *Acts* 14, 15, 17. verses, nay Saint *Paul* tells us, if they had known it they would not have done it, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. But this is an high aggravation of sin to know it, and yet to commit it. All that *Paul* could plead for his bloody sin was his ignorance, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. If *Paul* had known it to be a sin, he would not have done it for all the World, 26. *Acts* 9. But what canst thou say for thy self, O sinner, that sinnest against knowledge, thou that knowest swearing to be

a sin; and yet wilt swear, drunkenness and yet be drunk, whoredom, yet play the baud, oppression of the poor, cozening, yet gripe and cheat. O know that your sins deserve an hotter Hell, than they that Crucified Christ, and worse than *Paul's* that persecuted Christ. O sinner, tremble to think that thou art worse than *Herod* and *Pilate*, and the cruel *Jews* that spit in Christ's face, had they known so much as you, or made so much profession they would not have done the like.

2. 'Tis a willful sin. This aggravation makes this sin like *Saul*, taller by the head and shoulders than all other sins; we pity a man that is working upon the top of an house, and his foot slips, and he falls down and bruises himself, but that man that goes willfully to the top of an house, and on set purpose, leaps down and breaks his neck, deserves no pity at all; sins of weakness and infirmity are called in Scripture, *περίπτωση* the slipping of the foot unawares, these we are to pity and be carefull of 6. *Gal.* 1. there are three words significant, *παραπλῆξις* *preoccupatus* overtaken unawares, *περίπτωση* the slipping of the

foot, ~~scamp~~ set him in joynt again. God doth pity such, and he would have us pity such as sin out of weakness, but a willfull sin, 'tis a sin that God cannot endure; see what charge Christ gives his Ministers concerning such Persons, who willfully contain^{ue} in their sins against the means, 6. *Mark*. 11. and again there is a dreadfull place, 22. *Revel*. 11. ~~that~~ he that is willfully so, so the place must be understood; what follows verse 12. remember that under the law there was a sacrifice appointed for the sin of infirmity, but the willfull sinner was to be cut off, read and tremble, and that place, ~~is~~ *Numb*. 27, 30. 31.

3. 'Tis a deliberate sin; a sin in cool blood, this sin is the sin of our thoughts, we contrive it there and then put it in practise; this is like the *Gadarens* they besought Christ to be gone from them, for they had no leisure to hear him Preach, they had work enough to do to look after their Swine; so these Persons they have no time to entertain Christ in their hearts, they are full of contrivances how to manage and carry on their sin. O this makes this sin abominable, because we commit it

it with deliberation ; an holy man may commit a sin in a passion which he hates, O but these they set their thoughts and their wits a work to commit this sin ; the Scripture always condemns deliberate sinning, 4. *Prov.* 14, 15. What sinners ? O deliberate sinners, they are exprested two ways (1) by contriving sin, forecassing it on their beds, verse 16. (2) by their deliberate commission of it, 'tis as their meat and drink to them verse 17. there is a woe to such, 2. *Mic.* 1. these are far from mercy 14. *Prov.* 22. err i.e. from mercy as the Antithesis note. I will shew you the sad end of such Persons in the case of *Joab* 1 *Kings* 2. 5, 6. *Joab* had killed many in war, O but those two he contrived their death, he killed them in cool blood, that brought sorrow to him at last, so here &c. tremble at it.

4. 'Tis an heart hardning sin, other sins defile the heart, but this hardens a man's heart against all reproofs, admonitions, checks of Conscience, and all means of Repentance whatever ; this is another great aggravation of this sin, this was that which was the sin of *Pharaoh*, God had sent him message after message, and

yet all would not do, because his sin had hardened his heart, this provoked the Lord to destroy him. O sinners tremble at this, hardness of heart will assuredly bring destruction; there are two terrible Texts to this purpose, 9. *Job.* 4. 29. *Prov.* 1. hear this you that have been told of your sins and yet will not leave them, have had message after message, Sermon after Sermon, reproof after reproof, and yet all is nothing, you keep your own Iniquities still, O tremble to think that your hearts are hardened to your own destruction.

5. 'Tis a sin that makes us slight and contemn all the Judgments of God; as long as we keep this sin in us, all afflictions will do us no good at all, 27. *Prov.* 22. mark it, his foolishness *i.e.* his sin, we have two notable examples of this; *Feroboam* you know what was his sin, the Scripture calls it so the sin of *Feroboam*, God sends a Prophet to cry against him for it, what doth he? see 1 *Kings* 13. 4, 6. mark it he prays that his hand may be restored, not his sin mortified, 'tis a sign his heart was not humbled by this Judgment, as appear likewise verse 33. the other is King *Abaz* 2. *Chron.* 28. 22. O Brethren,

thren, take notice of this when afflictions will work no good upon you, O this is the aggravation of your own Iniquity; for any other sin, O how will God's Judgments humble us and make us leave them, but this our own Iniquity, 'tis not all the storms and tempests whatever will make us cast them over-board, O sinners look on your selves you that have had great sicknesses and great afflictions, and yet you retain your own Iniquities still, the Swearer his Swearing the Drunkard his Drunkenness &c. O 'tis a fearfull sign that God hath rejected you as 'tis said of *Israel*, 6. *Jer.* 29, 30.

6. 'Tis a sin of custom that's another great aggravation of it. O Brethren, once committing a sin is enough to sink any of us to Hell, as once swearing, once lying, once cozening, &c. but to make a custom of it, how can we expect mercy. Is a Thief Arraigned for Fellony, and 'tis proved that he hath been a Thief so many years, he hath made it his trade and custom, the Judge will condemn that man presently without any favour, never put such an Old Rogue to his Psalm of mercy. O then what is it to make a

trade and custom of sin; other sins we may say men commit only by the bye, but this their own Iniquity, 'tis their very trade and custom, there is a dreadfull place, tremble at it you that have lived in any known sin many years, 13. *Jer.* 23, 24.

7. 'Tis a sin that we take the greatest delight in, that's another aggravation of it; to commit sin is ill enough but to take pleasure and delight in sin, O that is most horrid. Is it not grief enough to a Father that his Son will do what he would not have him, but to delight to vex his Father, O this is the height of undutifulness; sin in Scripture is called a grieving of God, a vexing his Holy Spirit, now they that delight in any sin, delight to vex God; the Apostle reckons these Persons among those that are rejected, or given over by God to themselves the saddest Judgment of all, 1. *Rom.* 28, 32. and Christ threatens them, 1. *Prov.* 22, 31. so 2. *Prov.* 14, 18.

8. 'Tis a ruling sin, that's another great aggravation of it. O Brethren, do you not tremble at this to have a *Beelzebub* in your hearts, the Prince of Devils, the King

King of sins ; such a man hath the curse of *Cham* lighted upon him, to be a servant of servants, his other sins are servants, all of them to this Iniquity this great *Beelzebub*, and he himself is slave to them all. O what a case is that man in, that is servant to his sin, his lust, whatever work his sin sets him about he must do it, there is no King in the World hath such a power over his Subjects, as sin hath if it gets once to rule, sin will make a man hang himself, or drown himself, or cut his own throat ; experience is witness, and therefore the Apostle exhorts us especially against this sin upon this account, 6. *Rom.* 12, 13. whatever you do, do not keep a reigning sin in you.

9. 'Tis a sin that must be maintained at an high rate ; a man's own Iniquity will bring him as we say to skin and bones, how many have wasted all their Estates to satisfy their lusts, and afterwards have been fain to go a begging, so the Prodigal. Nay 'tis not Estate and Body will serve the turn, this sin will ruin the Soul too. O tremble sinners to think of this, God hath given you fair Estates in the World, God hath given you healthy Bodies,

dies, God hath given you reason to rule all the Creatures in the World, above all God hath given you Immortal Souls, and will you spend all these upon such a baggage as sin is. Do but think of the story of *Absalom*, he was the Son that *David* loved and cockered most of all his Children, bred him up at an high rate, and this Son he seeks his Fathers Life and Kingdom; so will this sin deal with you.

10. The great aggravation of all is this, that this sin comes nearest of all sins to that great transgression the sin against the Holy Ghost; as we say of some things they are so cold, as that if they were but a degree or two colder they were rank poyson; so this sin had it but two drams more, 'twere the very sin against the Holy Ghost, and that is malice and final impenitency. O therefore sinner take heed thou art upon the very brink of Hell, upon the very borders and edge of that unpardonable sin, O cast out this sin least God cast thee out of his presence.

Now Brethren, consider these ten particulars the aggravations of this sin, and methinks none of us all should ever love it

it more ; a sin so dishonourable to God, so inconsistent with our profession, so scandalous in respect of the Gospel, so opposite to true conversion, sound and sincere holiness, a sin that wins our affections from Christ, hardens our hearts against the means of grace, fills us with darkness, robs us of all graces, and renders us liable to the Wrath of God and Eternal Damnation.

A Sixth Motive is this.

6. Consider the several dreadful effects of this sin. This sin is the true Pandora's box, that lets fly all miseries and mischiefs upon us. This sin makes our Souls a mere *Bethesda* full of impotencies, sicknesses, troubles and sorrows ; I can compare it to nothing better than to that poyson which some call the Jesuits poyson, which (as some say) if a man drink it, he shall perceive nothing, but it will work insensibly in his body, and kill him many years after ; so O sinner, it may be for the present thou seest no evil at all in this thy sin, thou findest no damage at all by it, but many years hence thou may'st find
and

and feel the poyson of it in thy bones the gnawings and gripings of it in thy Conscience, be sure at one time or other it will meet with thee, 'twill never let thee go to thy grave in peace. Brethren, give me leave to rip open the belly of this Adder, and you shall see what a venomous brood is in it.

1. This sin the *Dalilah* that lies in thy bosom, and in whose lap thou sleepest so securely, hath scissors to cut of thy locks wherein all thy strength lies, it makes a man like *Reuben* weak as water, unable to resist the least temptation, 49. *Gen.* 3, 4. *Reubens* sin took away *Reubens* strength and excellency, so this sin whoever maintains it, shall never excell in any thing that is good; what the disease of the Scurvy is to the Body, that is this sin to the Soul, O how faint and weak and weary are many in Holy Duties, O how feeble when under temptations, it makes a man unable to resist what is evil, and to perform any thing that is good, read that story 7. *Josb.* 2, 3, 4, 5. what was the reason of this, you shall see verses 10, 11, 12, 13. you see how that one *Achan* in the Camp of *Israel*, made them all faint and loose
all

all their strength. O Christians when you find your selves weak in faith, weak and faint in Holy Duties, in serving God, weak in opposing temptations and lusts, why then look narrowly, there is an *Achan* in your hearts, and till that sin be out you can have no strength; O Brethren, what a sad thing is this? If I speak in respect of the body, you will understand me the better; what a sad thing is it for a man that hath nothing but his labour to maintain himself and Family withal, for this man to loose all his strength that he is not able to help himself, O this weakness will bring poverty on apace upon him, you will pity such a man, O you will say he is a poor weak creature and deserves to be pittied; pity your own Souls you are ready to drop into Hell, and you cannot help your selves, why sin hath weakned you, you may say a Prayer but there is no strength in it, you may keep Sabbaths and perform Holy Duties, but there is no strength in them, and no good comes to your poor Souls by them, you may go to the Sacrament, but you get no strength by it; what fresh-water-Soldiers are you to oppose the vanities of the World, or
to

to look death in the face, it makes you look paler than death it self. After God had reckoned up all the sins of *Jerusalem* observe how he speaks to her, 16. *Ezek.* 30. so may we say to many sinners, O how weak are you grown! what every lust too strong for you, every temptation too hard for you, what so weak that you cannot shut your Mouths against an Oath or a bad word, so weak that you cannot stop your feet from going to the Alehouse, what so faint that one Sabbath in a week, one Sermon in a day quite tires you out. O Brethren, you may thank this your own sin, it takes away all your strength from you, *Job* will tell you the way to get strength, 17. *Job.* 9. purge out sin and you shall get strength.

2. This sin will mix with all thy Holy things, and so make even thy best things odious unto God; when thou prayest this sin will mix with thy Prayers, and make them an abomination to the Lord, when thou hearest a Sermon this sin will be there with thee, and if it do not stop thy ears, yet 'twill barricado up thy heart, that thou shalt hear in vain or in hearing not hear, when thou receivest the Sacrament

ment 'twill mix even there also, 'twill come to the Lords Table with thee, and so thou shalt eat and drink there thine own damnation, like *Judas* at the *Passover*, the Sop and the Devil both went down his throat together, so the Sacramental Bread and Wine and thy Sin all go together, and what dost thou think Christ will say of such a receiving. O firs know this that God hates all such mixtures, he hates such services, 1. *Isaiah* 13, 14, 15, 22. verses, O saith God do not serve me so, I cannot endure this, either leave off thy sins or leave off thy sacrifices. *Gideon* had Seventy Sons and but one Bastard, and that one Bastard destroyed all the rest; you may easily apply this to your selves, you have performed many duties, done many good works, but this sin will bane them, poyson them, destroy them all.

3. This sin 'twill be to you like the worm at the root of *Jonahs* Gourd, 'twill make all your pleasures and delights to wither. Alas People they love sin because they love pleasures, they think if they part with their sins, then they must say farewell pleasures, farewell a merry
and

and an happy life, whereas sin like Summer frosts, nips the very buds and blossoms of all our outward comforts and delights, sin poysons all these fountains from whence stream forth all a man's comfort and delight.

1. Sin takes away the cause of all comfort, 2 *Kings* 5. 1. that took away all *Naamans* comfort, in all his riches, and greatness and honour, so a man may have great riches, great friends, great honours, but he is a covetous Wretch, or but he is a terrible drunkard, or but he is a filthy Whoremaster, O these buts spoil all, that man hath no cause to be merry to day, that is to be hanged to morrow, and thou sinner, though thou hast money enough and estate enough to make thee merry, O but thou hast a sin also for which thou may'st be damned before another day come. 'Tis madness for a man to laugh when he is going to Hell; and as long as any of us do keep this sin we are going to Hell.

2. Sin takes away the sweetness and juice of all our comforts; one of the Fathers compares all the pleasures of sinners to the bones that are flung to Dogs, all the

the meat is pickt off, and all the marrow suckt out; sinners like the Prodigal have only the husks of pleasures, sin makes these pleasures.

1. Empty, like thorns make a great crackling, but give but a little heat, like a nut that hath a maggot in the kernel, like a glass of wine that hath a Spider in it; what comfort can a man take in these? they are like a bladder full of wind to an hungry man; whereas cast out this sin and you may rejoyce heartily, as *Mary* when Christ was in her Womb, 1. *Luke* 46, 47.

2. Dangerous, like the *Israelites* Quails, so are all pleasures to sinners dainty but dangerous, 78. *Pf.* 30, 31. 'tis a dangerous thing for us to be taking our pleasures, when the wrath and anger of God is gone out against us; small comfort to have God to frown on us; but cast out sin, and then there is peace with thy pleasure, 3. *Prov.* 17. it cannot be said so of the ways of sin, her ways may seem to be pleasant, but there is no peace in her paths.

3. Very short, that pleasure cannot last long where sin is gnawing at the root of it, only the joy of the righteous is
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lasting, 4. *Phil. 4.* a man may rejoyce in sin but not alway, may rejoyce in the World but not alway, but he that rejoyce in the Lord may rejoyce always, no end of that joy.

3. Sin many times damps the sinner in the midst of his pleasures, it sends to *Belshazzar* an hand to write on the wall in the midst of his cups and merriment, and makes him tremble; it smote *Herod* with lice, even while he was honoured as a God; suppose any of you at a great feast very merry, and news is brought that your house is all on a fire, what comfort can you take in that mirth, you will leave dinner and friends and all. O sinner while thou art merry in the midst of thy delights the fire of God's Wrath is burning against thee, and Hell Fire is kindling for thy Soul.

4. Sin will make all our comforts to end in sorrow, 2. *Ecc. 2.* A sinner knows no measure in his pleasures, but he laughs even to madness. *Nabal* though but a Country Farmer, yet he makes a feast like the feast of a King, 1 *Sam. 25. 36.* but how ends it, see verse 37. A sinner's sun always sets in the darkest cloud; he is all
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laughture in this World, and therefore is all sorrow in the other World; put these things together, O what an enemy is this sin to us, that will let us take pleasure in nothing, or else if we do take pleasure, like the Bee we are drowned in our own honey; this is another sad effect of this sin, no true comfort while we have it.

4. This sin robs us of all our beauty, I mean of all the beauty of our profession; what saith Christ to his Spouse, 4. *Cantic.*

1. why Doves eyes? O the Doves eye is most beautiful in this respect because 'tis the emblem of chastity; this is the beauty of Christianity to have the doves eye, a chaste eye looking only to Christ. Now sin that makes us cross-eyed and to look a squint, which is the greatest deformity that can be in the body, I am sure 'tis in the Soul; God abhors a professor that keeps any sin in his heart, that looks cross-eyed, one eye to the World and the other eye to God, 16. *Ezek.* 25. O Friends consider this, cast out your sin whatever it is, else all your prayers, profession, good words, good works will come to nothing, all your fair shews of being religious will come to nothing, Christ will not own

you for beautiful, Christ will not have his ipouse to wear black patches in her face, I mean the black spots of sin. Hear what Counsel is given to the Church 45. *Psalm*. 10. *i.e.* forget and forsake for the sake of Christ all that is dear to thee in this World, look only to Christ, and the reason v. 11. this is another sad effect of this sin, 'twill make us ugly in the eyes of Christ.

5. This sin will by degrees steal away our hearts from Christ, as 'twill take away our beauty that Christ will not love us, so 'twill take away our hearts from Christ that we shall not love him. How can we love Christ and Sin both together, the more we look towards sin the less we shall look towards Christ; *Judas* loved sin and therefore betrayed Christ, *Pilate* loved sin therefore condemned Christ, the Thief on the Cross loved sin and therefore he scoffed at Christ there also; and if any of us love any sin it will make us hate Christ as the *Jews* did, and flye away from Christ and forsake him as his Disciples did. O Brethren, consider what a dreadfull thing 'tis not to love Christ, 1 *Cor.* 16.22. all the curses in the Bible are comprehend-
ed under those two words; therefore
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tremble at it, to think what it is to love sin; 'tis a worthy speech of *Akempis* l. 2. c. 7. *de imit. Christi oportet dilectum pro dilecto relinquere, quia Jesus vult solus super omnia amari.* He that will love Christ must have no beloved sin.

6. This sin will at last fill the Soul with horror; O sinner, thou delightest in this sin now, but one day it will prove a Devil to thee; now it flatters thee, then 'twill affright thee; now thou runnest after it, one day thou shalt run from it, and yet shall never be able to get rid of it. *Judas* he first ran after his sin when he went to the High-Priests to betray Christ, O but afterwards he would fain have run away from that sin but could not; you sinners that cannot endure now to hear others cry out against your sins, shall one day cry out against your sins your selves; you that are angry with Ministers now for crying out O ye Drunkards, upon your death beds you will cry out O my Drunkenness, my Drunkenness; you that are angry with Ministers now for crying out, O ye Swearers, upon your death beds you will cry out, O my Swearing my Blaspheming of the Name of God; you that are

angry with Ministers now for crying out, O ye covetous Worldly minded men, upon your death beds will cry out, O my covetousness, O my Worldly mindedness; you shall see what this sin will do to you at last, 20. *Job.* 11, 12, 13, 14. v. O who would entertain a sin that will bring such an Hell into his Soul at last.

And now sinners consider these sad effects of this your own sin, how it will take away all your strength, make all your Religion odious to God, poyson all your pleasures and comforts, rob you of all your beauty, steal away your hearts from Christ, and bring Hell into your Souls at last, and will you run all these hazards rather than part with it; all that I can say more is sure you have a very great love to it.

A Seventh Motive is this.

7. Consider the blessings and the benefits that will accrue to you upon the casting out of this sin; these benefits are very many and very great. I will only touch upon some.

1. Now may you truly rejoyce and be merry, and you had never cause before in
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all your life to be merry, 15. *Luk.* 32. 'tis meet to be merry, before when sin lived in thee thy Soul was dead, now sin is dead and thy Soul liveth, nay more (mark it) 'tis not the prodigal, but his Father that saith so, O poor Soul thou mayst be sad no more, for God himself will come now and be merry with thee ; O what an harvest, what a plentiful crop of joy shall that Soul reap, that hath weeded out this sin out of his heart ! Assure thy self that there is a work of conversion wrought in thee, when thou hast cast out this sin. Now art thou the Child of God, before while thou kept this sin the Devil was thy Father, now thou mayst call God thy Father ; will not this make a man merry ? the Saints are described in Scripture with harps in their hands, and singing 14. *Rev.* 2, 3, 4, 5. to note the joy and comfort of that Soul that is freed from sin ; that day that *Haman* was hanged proved a joyfull day, and a day of gladness to all the *Jews*. O that day that any of us hath killed this sin, will prove the most joyfull day that ever we had in our lives ; the upright are commanded to rejoyce, 32. *Psal.* 11.

2. Now is the match fully concluded

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between Christ and thy Soul, now are the writings signed and sealed, now O poor Soul art thou made the Spouse of Christ an Heir of Heaven, and all that thou hast to be troubled for is only this (as *Austin* said of himself) *Nimis serò te amavi Domine*, that thou hast stood out so long before thou wouldst yield to Christ; know this that Christ is thine, and Heaven shall be thine; thou hast parted with a sin and thou hast found a Saviour; formerly sin and you were all one, now Christ and you are all one, 17. *John* 20, 21. Brethren, this is both an unspeakable Mystery, and also an unspeakable Mercy, for a poor Soul to be united to Christ, O if sinners knew this, they would never keep a sin more in their hearts.

3. Now can the Devil do you no more mischief, the Devil may roar and tear, and fret, and fume, but he can do that Soul no harm that is united to Christ; O what an happiness is this to be freed from the power of the Devil! when a man hath cast out his own Iniquity, then is the Devils Castle demolisht, and his main engine broken to pieces, 10. *Luk.* 17, 18. Obedience to the Gospel that curbs the power of
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of the Devil, obey Christ, and the Devil can never hurt you. After *Paul* had commended the *Romans* obedience to the Gospel, 16. *Rom.* 19. he adds verse 20. the God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly; cast out this sin and you cast out the Devil, trample upon this sin and you trample upon the very neck of the Devil.

4. Now you may trample upon all the miseries, and afflictions, and troubles, and crosses of this life; such Nightingals may sing with thorns at their Breasts, Upright *Noah* is safe and secure, when all the World is in a deluge; the Mariners found a calm Sea as soon as they cast *Jonah* over board; the Army of *Israel* quickly routed the men of *Ai* after they had stoned *Achan* to death. A pure Conscience like the Town Clerk of *Ephesus*, quickly appeaseth a multitude of distractions and discontents in the Soul, in the midst of outward dangers and calamities. As soon as *Judas* was gone out of their Company, Christ and his Disciples sung an Hymn; O poor Soul, whoever thou art that hast bid thy sin farewell, thou mayest then also bid all sorrow farewell, 5. *Job* 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. as

a Father takes out the sting out of a Snake or Adder, and then gives it to his little Child to play with it, so when sin is purged out, then all the afflictions our Heavenly Father sends us, are like Adders without sting or poyson, he knows they will not nor cannot hurt us, we may then play with them, 9. *Gen.* 12, 13, 14. Observe it, God makes a Bow the sign of his Covenant; O but that is rather a sign of anger; no, 'tis a Bow without an Arrow; so are all the miseries of the People of God in this World like the Rainbow, 'tis a Bow without an Arrow, there is no anger nor wrath in God against them.

5. Now are you fit for death, and now may you triumph over death; cast out this sin, and then cry O Death where is thy sting? This is the work and business that will cheer up your spirits upon your Deathbeds, this will make you look merrily upon your Friends that come to you, merrily upon the World you are leaving, merrily upon Death with whom you are to wrestle, and merrily upon Christ to whom you are going. O will a Soul say then, I would not have this sin in me now for a thousand Worlds, though once I was loath

loath to part with it, and could be hardly persuaded to it. When a man hath paid all his debts, if the Serjeant or Officer come and knock at his door, he will bid him come in and bid him welcome; so a Saint whose bonds are all cancelled by the merits of Christ, and whose sins are all purged out by the blood of Christ, when Death comes and knocks at the door of his earthly Tabernacle, come in Death (saith he) thou art welcome thou art very wellcome to me, I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.

Now put these things together, would you have Christ to embrace you, the Devil to be afraid of you, all afflictions to work good for you, would you live merrily, dye comfortably, then cast out this your own Iniquity.

8. Another Motive is this. Consider how many loud calls you have to leave this sin. I will be brief.

1. The voice of the word, 18. *Jer.* 31. 1. *Cor.* 5. 7. 12. *Heb.* 1. what should I add more, 'tis the voice of the whole Bible calling upon us to out with sin. This is the whole design of God in the whole Bible, it consists of four parts, First, precepts

cepts commanding us to leave sin. Secondly, presidents or examples to teach us to abhor sin. Thirdly, threatnings to affright us from sin. Fourthly, promises to allure us and persuade us from our sins; if you leave not this sin, you cross the whole design of God in the Scriptures; so that Brethren, either part with your sins or fling away your Bibles.

2. The voice of the rod, *Mic. 6. 9.* and what doth the rod say? see verse 13. O Brethren, remember all the judgments of God upon your Persons, Families, Relations, Goods, Names, Estates; remember this I say, that every rod calls for Repentance, cast out your Iniquities, 36. *Job 8, 9, 10.*

3. The voice of the blood of Christ; Christ's blood hath a voice 'tis a speaking blood, 12. *Heb. 24.* *Abel's* blood that cryed for vengeance, Christ's blood that calls for Repentance. Methinks sinners you may hear the blood of Christ speaking thus to you, O do not trample me under your feet; O do not make me as water spilt upon the ground, good for nothing; O do not leave me as a witness against you at the last day; if you sin against me you must

must needs perish, if you reject me there is nothing else can help you. Brethren, this is the very Speech and Language of the blood of Christ to you, 10. *Heb.* 26, 29. Now put these things together, and remember that God hath spoken to you, you have been often enough called upon, O do not sin against the word of God that's a saving word; O do not sin against the rod of God, that's an instructing rod; but above all do not sin against the blood of Christ, that's an healing blood, if you sin against this blood, God hath not a more precious sovereign balme in all his *Gilead* for your Souls; and mind this that sinning against the blood of Christ, will cost you dear at the day of judgment; the Saints they have this blood at a cheap rate, and it doth them good, but sinners must pay dear for it to all Eternity.

9. Another Motive is this. Consider your profession, and there is enough in this were there no other argument to persuade you against this sin. The Apostle urgeth this same argument to the *Ephesians* 5. *Eph.* 3. this becometh not your profession; so may we say here to willful sinners, O these evil courses become not your pro-

profession ; when *Alexander* was persuaded to run at the Olympick games, ^hmade this answer. *Vellem si non essem Alexander*, when *Scipio* was proffered an Harlot answered ; *vellem si non essem Imperator*, so do you answer all temptations to sin, *Christianus sum, committere non possum* ; let others do as they please thou art engaged to Christ, thy profession will aggravate thy sin the more. Consider some principal parts of thy Christian profession, they are all arguments against this sin.

1. Look back to thy Baptisme, there thou hast promised and also sworn to Christ to forsake sin, and hast thou an own sin a dear sin that thou keepest, thou art a forsworn wretch ; Baptisme is a seal of the Covenant between God and thee ; now thou must either deny sin or deny thy hand and seal to Christ. Tell me sinner, wert thou Baptized or no ? if yea, and what livest thou in a known willfull sin, out upon thee, thou shalt be far worse tormented in Hell than Heathens.

2. Look upon thy prayers ; how often hast thou prayed against sin, and what dost thou live in sin ; O abominable Prayers !
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thou shalt be ~~awakened~~, out of thine own mouth will Christ condemn thee. Do not say thou hopest to go to Heaven for thy good prayers, nay thou shalt to Hell for them.

3. Look upon thy promises ; speak truly, when thou wert sick didst thou not promise if God would but spare thy life thou wouldst become a new man ? when thou wert in trouble didst thou not promise God to leave thy sin if he would help thee out ? Is not all this true ? and what art thou the same man still ? take heed of breach of promise with God ; God will not be mocked, 66. *Psalm* 13, 14. an honest man will be as good as his word. O this is to make Religion odious, and thy profession a mere stalking horse to thy lusts.

4. Look on thy coming to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. Didst thou not come to the Lords Table with an intent to leave sin, if thou didst, why dost thou not leave it ? if not thou art a most base dissembling Hypocrite in the sight of God, thou hast profaned that Holy Ordinance, and the blood of Christ will be required at thy hands. In a word, if thou
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leave not this sin, better thou hadst never heard of a Sacrament, better thou hadst never promised Repentance, better thou hadst never prayed at all, better thou hadst never been baptized, yea ten thousand times better thou hadst never been born, or that God had taken thee out of thy Mothers belly, and sent thee to Hell the first moment of thy life. O sirs, consider seriously in what a sad condition you are in; the very Heathens will condemn thee, and the Devil that tempted thee will cry out shame upon thee in Hell. 'Tis a most horrid taking of God's name in vain, to make an outward profession and yet live in sin; thy very prayers and Holy duties will bring greater damnation upon thee, than the sins of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* upon them.

10. Another Motive is this. Consider what great things thou hast to loose, 19. *Acts* 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. O how did *Demetrius* his argument prevail with them to cry up their *Diana*, (*viz.*) the loss that they were like to sustain by it. O consider the loss you are like to sustain by keeping this *Diana* this your own Iniquity, let this prevail with you to cast it out. O sinners, you are undone, you are undone to all

all Eternity, unless you cast out this sin. Consider these two things.

1. The things themselves you shall loose by keeping of this sin ; they are great things, things of great price and great value.

1. The Favour of God, the smiles of his fatherly countenance ; sin that draws a cloud before the face of God, hence is that expression, 90. *Psalm* 7, 8. O what comfort can that man have in his life, that wants the favour of God, the smiles of his countenance, a frown from God is like Hell it self.

2. The protection of God ; when we are out of God's ways, we are out of God's protection, 91. *Pf.* 11. every Saint while he walks in God's ways, hath a sure life-guard of Heavenly Angels, 34. *Pf.* 7. O this is a blessed condition, O who would loose this blessing for the commission of a sin. O go not out of the path that leads to Heaven there is safety, in a sinfull way thou art left alone, there God and his Angels leave thee. A Woman that was a professor went to a stage play, and there the Devil entred into her, when one askt the Devil how he durst enter into such a

one, he answered I found her in my way. O consider of this loss, of God's protection.

3. Our assurance. Tho' the commission of sin may not blot a Saints name out of the book of life, yet 'twill blot and blur his evidences for Heaven, and without this assurance we can have no comfort, and while we live in any sin we can have no assurance; O, sin will make us live in a doubting and despairing condition. Sirs, if you know not what you loose by sin in loosing assurance, you shall know it upon your Death-beds; O what a sad thing will it be to dye without assurance, then all your Friends, all your Lands, all your bags of money will do you no good, nothing but assurance is a cordial against death.

4. But greater things yet are lost if thou part not with this sin; thou shalt loose thy part in Christ, thy place in Paradise, thy Mansion in Heaven, sin will keep thee from God and from Eternal Happiness. O sinner if thou wilt enjoy all these things, then thou must part with this sin, let others that have no hopes in the other World, let all those that have nothing to loose keep their
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their sins, do not thou for a sin venture the loss of all together.

2. Consider the loss, 'tis an irreparable loss, a loss that all the pleasures of sin cannot make thee amends for, this is a loss will utterly undo thee. This very thing made Holy *Anselm* say, that he had rather be thrust into Hell without sin, than go to Heaven with sin; for 'tis not Hell it self can make a man miserable, but 'tis sin that makes Hell a place of misery; were there no sin in Hell, there should be no sorrow in Hell. O consider then what a loss 'twill be to you to keep sin, 'twill make you more miserable than Hell it self can, you do not only loose a worldly estate by the first death, but sin will bring a second death upon you also, whereby you shall loose all the Joys, Glories, and Happiness of Heaven to all Eternity.

11. Another Motive is this. It is an unquestionable truth on all hands, never any body in the World unless out of his wits did ever deny this; that we must cast out sin. O sinner thou with whom God is pleading this day in this Sermon, and hath been pleading all along in the handling of this text, thou dost acknow-
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ledge the truth of this, why then dost thou not practise, 14. *Rom.* 22. latter part, when thou sayest one thing (this sin must out) and dost another thing (keep this sin in thy heart still) thou condemnest thy self; thine own Conscience will draw up a bill of Indictment against thee at the last day; take heed of that, so likewise all others acknowledge this truth. As for other Do-

This he said in respect of the place where he Preached these Sermons.

ctrines most of them have been and are called in Question by Hereticks, but never any Questioned the truth of this, were this Church now full of Papists, Socinians, Arminians, Brownists, Anabaptists, Millenarians, Quakers, and all other Hereticks in the World, I am persuaded we should all agree in this, that every man ought to keep himself from his own Iniquity. O then sinner, this Argument will leave thee inexcusable at the day of Judgment all the World and thine own Conscience will condemn thee for not casting out this sin.

12. Another Motive is this. This is the power of Godliness, the power of Religion, all your Religion besides is but a form

form of Godliness. We will a little alter the Apostles words, 1 Cor. 15. 14, 17. we may say here, if you be yet living in this sin, and this sin living in you, then is not Christ risen from the dead, *i.e.* as to you. Christ is no better than a dead Christ, Christ is not raised to life in your Souls, and if Christ be not risen in your hearts your faith is vain, if you be yet in your sins all our Preaching is vain also. Brethren, if you will not part with this sin all our Preaching will be in vain to you. As some Quakers lately turned cast this in my teeth, that they got no good by hearing of me, why Brethren, do I or did I ever promise any man Salvation for hearing of Sermons, nay I tell you more, if you do not reform and practise this truth, you will never get good by Sermon as long as you live ; never talk of Religion, never comfort your selves with sheltering your selves under this Sect, or that Sect, this persuasion or that persuasion, till you have cast out this sin you have no Religion at all in you ; *Religio vox vivenda non audienda.* There be many will give Christ the bare hearing of truths, but Christ calls for doing as well as hearing ; for living as

well as learning. Christ when at the day of Judgment he shall keep his great Affizes, he will proceed there as in these Courts here, every sinner must hold up his hand at that bar, Christ will examine our hands as well as our hearts, our actions as well as our affections, 24. *Pf.* 3, 4. Christ will have works as well as words. O Brethren, set upon this work, do not content your selves with a form of Godliness, O let not these Sermons rise up in Judgment against you at the last day; therefore I will conclude this Sermon with the words of our Saviour Christ, wherewith he concluded his Sermon on the Mount, 7. *Mat.* 24, 25, 26, 27.

2. Means and Directions.

And first of the Means.

But before I prescribe or set down the severall receipts or antidotes, that may serve as a counter-poyson against this sin, it will be necessary to put one Question to you, and that is this, are you willing to part with this sin? if you be but willing, I dare warrant you a cure, but if you be not willing, all the Ministers in the World may

may Preach out their lungs in vain to you.

But perhaps some of you will say, this is a strange Question, why do you put such a Question to us? what do you think of us? do you look upon us as mere Hypocrites, do you think we are not willing?

Hear me and I will shew you as strange a Question as this, that our Saviour put to a man, 5. *John 6*. This is a very strange Question if you consider three particulars.

1. The sickness of this man; it was a Palsie, a sickness that makes a man's life both a burden to himself and to all that are about him; now to ask such a man, or indeed to ask any man that is sick, whether he would be healed, were one would think a strange Question.

2. The length of his sickness; Eight and Thirty Years, one would think a man that hath lien bed-ridden so long, should be so weary of his disease, that he need not be asked this Question, wilt thou be made whole?

3. The place where he lay at the Pool of *Bethesda*, the place of cure, he came or was brought thither on purpose to be

cured; why then doth our Saviour ask him this Question, whether he would be made whole? Brethren, here is enough in these three particulars to make you to wonder at the Question; yet consider 'tis our Saviour Christ puts the Question, and surely there is more in it than we can see at first sight, for Christ the wisdom of the Father would not put forth an unnecessary or unprofitable Question; and therefore there are divers expositions of it, I will name (and only name) some.

1. Wilt thou be made whole? *i.e.* wilt thou use the means to be made whole? many love the cure that hate the means; every body loves health, few love Physick.

2. While this man lay sick he was an object of pity and charity and might get much alms, if he were whole he might loose them; the Question is wilt thou be made whole? that is, art willing to loose what thou gettest by thy sickness to be made sound.

3. He had been sick so long, that now his sickness was grown to be almost a second nature to him, and it did not trouble him so much as at the first, he had forgot
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the price of his health ; so that the Question is wilt thou that hast layen so long sick be made whole.

I will name no more.

Now to apply this to our present purpose ; there is every one of you hath one sin or other, that is your particular sin or sickness of your Soul, and you have lien under the power of this sin many a year, some Thirty, some Forty, or Fifty, or Sixty, or Eighty years ; nay more you come to these waters the Ordinances, you lye at *Bethesda* under the means of grace, as if you desired to be rid of sin, yet still the Question is, will you be made whole ? will you part with this Iniquity ? I know you will all answer, yes, you are willing to part with sin ; O but still the Question is will you be healed ?

1. Do you love the means, are you willing to make use of such means as the Lord prescribes you in his word for the good of your Souls ? can your hearts answer to this Question, whatever the Lord bids us do we will do it ? like setting Dogs that hunt eagerly to catch the fowls, but will rather starve than eat any of them ; so many hunt after Sermons but not do them. Do you
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endeavour to practise all the Sermons that you hear ; if you hear Sermons but do not practise them, 'tis a sign you are loath to part with your sins.

2. Are you willing to forego whatever pleasure, or profit, or advantage sin brings in to you, that you may be healed of it ? O can your hearts answer to this Question ; there be many that say they hate sin, yet love the pleasure, profit, and wages of sin. Brethren, if you love not the meat, why do you eat of the broth ? if men love not hanging, why do they love stealing ? do as *Zacheus* did, 19. *Luk.* 8. if you would turn sin out of doors, turn all its lumber out of doors too.

3. Have not custom in sin made you unwilling to part with sin ? have you not lived so long in sin, that you do not know now how to live without it ? have you not forgot the price of Salvation and the worth of your Souls ? O you that have been sinners so many years, you that are Swearers of Fourscore years standing ? are you willing to leave your Swearing ? you that are Drunkards of Threescore years standing ? are you willing to leave your drinking ? you that have been covetous worldly

worldly minded Persons, griping Usurers, biting Landlords, that have used the trick of cozening many years, will you be made whole? can you part with your old companions, can you come out of *Sodom* and never look back, can you cross the Red-Sea, and not smell the Garlikes and Onions of Egypt on the other side? can you or are you willing for the love of your Souls to do whatever Christ bids you, and forego what ever Christ would have you? why Brethren, if this be your resolution, then hearken and I will lay you down such means be your sin what it will, I'll warrant you a thorough cure.

I have already in the doctrinal part laid down nine several remedies or receipts against this sin, which if you would but make use of might work the cure, but least you may have forgot them, I will add a few more and lay them down before you as plainly and as practically as I can, so that if after all this you still retain your own Iniquities and go to Hell, you shall thank your selves for it.

1. The first is a very plain and easie receipt (and so shall all the rest be) O sinner, thou hast that within thee that will
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cure thee. As we say to some sick Persons, what need you send to the Apothecaries, you have herbs enough in your own gardens to cure you; so here I say, sinners you have that which can cure you in your own breasts.

Quest. But you will say, I pray what is that?

I Answer thus. Friends what do you think of *Judas*? and what do you think of *Herod*? and what do you think of *Pontius Pilate*? I know what you will say; you will say thus, why if we had been in their cases we would not have done as they did, if we had been in *Judasses* place, we would not have betrayed Christ; in *Herods* place, we would not have mocked Christ; in *Pilates* place, we would not have condemned Christ; well I ask you further, what do you think of such and such Neighbours of yours; why I know what you will say, you wonder that such a one is such a Drunkard, another such a Swearer, &c. you wonder that they do not leave their ill courses, you wonder that they do not look after their Souls more and Eternity. Again I ask you further, what do you think of Sermons? I know what
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you will say here also, why if we did but practise what we hear we might do well ; well then is this your verdict ? is this your judgment ? this comes out of your own breasts, do as you say and you may cure your selves ; you say were you in *Judas*'s place you would not have done as he did, why then have a care you do not as ill as *Judas* or worse than *Judas* ; you wonder at your neighbours that they are no better, why, wonder at your selves that you are no better ; you say all the good that comes by Sermons is practise, why then if you would get good by hearing Sermons follow your own directions. Do not give away all your counsel to others and take none your selves ; Our Saviour reproves this very thing in the Scribes and Pharisees, 23. *Mat.* 23, 30. so say you if we had lived in our Fore-fathers days, we would have been better than they, O be as good now as you think you would have been then ; you that are able to prescribe to others, why do you not prescribe to your selves ? you that are such rare Physicians in other mens distempers, take heed that you prove not very fools in your own case ! alas sinner, all the World cannot do thee

thee good if thou art an enemy to thy self, well sinner here is thy case, thou wouldst feign go to Heaven that's thy desire, thy very reason as 'tis inlightned by the word tells thee, then thou must leave thine own Iniquity, now if thou wilt not follow the best counsel of thine own heart who can help thee; thou speakest against others that live in sin, and art angry with them because they will not reform; O be not like to some Parents, that will beat their Children for swearing and yet swear themselves, or like some Magistrates that will punish drunkards, and yet be drunk themselves; so that this is the first means improve what thou hast in thine own breast of reason, or counsel, or judgment. Many Persons can give such counsel to others that if they would but follow it themselves would prove rare Christians.

2. A second means to help out with this sin our own Iniquity is this; go to the Scriptures Gods *Pharmacothea*, his closet of receipts, and see what particular receipt thou canst find there against thy particular sin; the Scriptures doth not only give us general rules and directions for our whole lives, but also particular directions in particular

particular cases, and peculiar remedies against particular sins; to instance in a few; is any man inclined to the sin of Fornication? the Scripture hath a particular receipt for that, *1 Cor. 7. 9.* Is any man given to stealing? the Scripture hath a particular receipt for that, *4. Eph. 28.* Is covetousness thy sin? a receipt *19. Mat. 21.* another *119. Ps. 36.* Dost thou distrust God's providence, our Saviours receipt, *12 Luk. 24, 31.* is pride thy sin, *11. Mat. 29.* Thus Brethren, if you will but search the Scriptures, you shall find receipts for your particular sins, and do what the Scripture bids you do, and you shall find a cure wrought, Physicians they ask this Question; How come People to dye that have so much sage in their Gardens? may we not much more ask this Question: How come People to perish, so many Souls to go to Hell that have Bibles in their hands, and Bibles in their houses, and Bibles continually by them. O Brethren, make use of this excellent book, this is Heavens dispensatory, here is a salve for every sore, here are the waters of life the wells of Salvation for poor perishing sinners.

3. Have an eye to the promises of God
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in Scripture, these will stir up our hearts to fight with our sins. I will allude to that story of *David* & *Sam.* 17. 25, 26, 32. so say I to you thus and thus shall it be done to the man that casts out his own Iniquity, his name shall be enrolled in the Book of Life, his portion shall be in Heaven, he shall be called the Friend of God, shall be made a Co-heir with Christ; O Brethren, would not all this stir up a man's spirits and make his fingers itch to be dealing with this *Goliath* like sin his own Iniquity; take the summ of all the promises in that one Text, 3. *Rev.* 21. how many men have ventured their lives in battel only in hope to be Knighted, the victorious Saint shall be crowned that's more, shall be crowned with glory that's more, shall be crowned with an Eternal weight of glory that's more yet; here is the very strength of the Apostles argument, 1 *Cor.* 9. 25. latter part. Is an earthly Crown that last but for a while so forcible a means to make a man run, labour, strive, fight for it; O how much more than an incorruptible. Now first here's your choice, overcome this sin and you shall at death ride victoriously to Heaven, triumphing not only over this
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sin but over every sin, and not only over every sin but over all your spiritual enemies the Devil, Death, Hell, and all the powers of it. Otherwise if you live as slaves to this sin all your days at Death, the Devil will ride in triumph over you, dragging your miserable Caitiffe Souls to Hell, to be ^{there} tormented to all Eternity.

4. If any man would cast out his Iniquity he must also cast off the World; and therefore know this for a truth, that that man that either loves or fears the World will never cast off sin. It was a sad judgment upon *Corah, Dathan and Abiram*, that the earth swallowed them up, 16. *Numb.* 32. and thus it is with many now, the earth swallows them quite up, the World takes up all their time that they cannot mind the everlasting concernments of their Souls; if you put earth upon fire, the earth will put out the fire, so if there be any spark of Fire or Heavenly zeal kindled in any Soul to the destroying of sin by the word, presently comes in the World and quencheth it; the love of the World makes many with *Demas* forsake Christ and embrace sin, and the fear of the World makes many with *Pilate* kill Christ, and

X

save

save this *Barabbas* this Soul murdering sin alive. O Friends, if you would renounce sin you must renounce the World also; the Apostle tells us that they that mind earthly things are enemies to the Cross of Christ.

5. Take not up a profession of Religion at large, but enter into a more strict way of holiness. 'Tis the Devil that hath taught men this damnable art of being professors at large; that is, to profess Christ and serve sin; 'tis not enough for a man to have a smack of Religion, no if ever we would be free from this sin from the power of it, we must be Christians in good earnest. Those Birds that fly abroad tho' some of them can sing well yet 'tis but their wild notes, but the Birds that are kept up in cages these learn to warble out pleasant tunes. A profession at large will never make a man leave his wild notes, 2. *Rom.* 28, 29. O do not content your selves only with being Baptized, with hearing Sermons, receiving the Sacrament, saying over your Prayers, living honestly, all this is only a profession at large, and will never kill the power of sin; but learn the power of Godliness, get a true Faith in Christ, a true

true love to Christ, a care to please him, be much in Communion with God, be much in searching your hearts, in humbling your selves for sin, in bewailing your weakness, in striving against lusts, in denying your selves, &c. this is the way to kill sin.

6. Avoid the company of the wicked, those that live under the power of sin; wicked men are sins panders and decoys to draw others into the net. Many a man I am perswaded had not lived in such or such sins, had they not lived in sinfull companies; what *Solomon* saith of the angry man, that may we say of the wicked man, 22. *Prov.* 24, 25. 'tis a common Proverb, he that lives with a lame man will learn to limp. How soon did good *Joseph* learn to swear, when he came into wicked *Pharaohs* company; and therefore as you would avoid the sin avoid the sinner; we read in Scripture how wicked men have often fared the better for the Godly, but never that the Godly fared the better for the company of the wicked, but rather the worse. I have read of the *Amorites*, that they would never suffer a stranger to be with them above the space of 3

days, for fear of Infection and Corruption with their evil manners. O we should be as carefull of having such for our companions, that are strangers to God and the power of Godliness; 'tis impossible for that man to keep sin under his power, who keeps company with those that are under the power of sin, 119. *Psal.* 115. 'tis a very hard matter to keep company with the wicked, and to keep the commandments of God both together.

7. And lastly be much in Soul sanctifying meditations; when the stream or river that watered a Medow is turned another way, that ground will in time grow barren again. Brethren, our thoughts and meditations are like streams and rivers to Meadows, do make us fruitfull in those things that we meditate on; if we mind only wickedness 'twill make us fruitfull in wickedness; now turn the stream, and sin you shall see will dry up apace. O meditate much on the great things of Eternity, this will take of your appetite from sin. I have read a story of a Godly Man who being tempted by his former evil companions to sin, he made this answer, I am so busie in reading a little book with 3 leaves, that I have

have no leisure so much as to mind my other business, and being asked afterwards whether he had read over the Book, replied, this book of 3 leaves are of 3 several colours, red, white, and black, which contain such deep Mysteries, that I have resolved with my self to read therein all the days of my life; in the first leaf which is red, I meditate on the precious Blood of Christ which was shed for my sins; in the white leaf, I meditate on the pure and delicious joys of Heaven; in the black leaf, I contemplate the hideous and dreadfull torments of Hell, prepared for the wicked to all Eternity. Thus Brethren, thus season your thoughts with such Soul sanctifying meditations, be always full of such thoughts, and I'll warrant you the power of sin will quickly be destroyed in you.

2. The Directions of two sorts.

1. In getting out this sin.

1. Be not over hasty in this work. I mean thus, do not think to get rid of this sin presently or in an instant; O how many have failed herein, because they have tryed once or twice, therefore have left of and utterly despaired of conquering this sin: Brethren, 'tis not the taking out of

two or three buckets of water that will empty a pond so deep as this is, no rather three or four hundred buckets must be taken out, 2. Cor. 12. 8. *Tus i.e. sape Chrysostomus apud Bezam. terque quaterque,* look you must be often upon your knees if you would quite rout this sin; chronick diseases are not soon cured but perseverance is to be used in the use of the means; Christian zeal must not be like straw that is soon kindled but quickly out. O Brethren, you must not tire or give over though you spend your whole life in killing only this single sin; O never think of dying before this sin be dead.

2. Do not set a time for this work but begin it presently. This is the great folly of Christians in cases which concern their Souls they set times for them, but in cases which concern only their Bodies or Estates they set on that presently; some set the time of sickness when well; when sick set the time after their recovery; some set that time when they are married and have a settled Family, others that are Married and have Families set the time when they break up house; so we pass of the time from time to time, till at last we loose many

ny of us both our time and our Souls; for the World we never think we can begin soon enough, for our Souls we always think it too soon. I have heard many old men say, O if they were young again O what Husbands would they be, how would they provide for the World, but you shall seldom hear those that are old say if they were young, O what penitents would they be. Consider the folly of this setting of time, *vid. Fullers* good thoughts in bad times.

1. 'Tis a means to waste and mispend our time; we loose all the time wherein we leave this great work undone, the longer we defer it the stronger grows our sin, and the weaker grow we; sin always gets by our delays, and we loose by them.

2. Herety we discover our despising of God and his commands, leaving his work to the very last; 'tis an affront and a great affront to God, after we have served the world, sin, lusts, our pleasures, then to say that we will serve God.

3. The sooner we begin this work the easier will it be to us; fire is soon quenched when it is but newly kindled, a young thorn or bramble is easily pulled up, the

fierce Lion may be tamed when he is a whelp; O the longer you bear with your sins the harder will it be for you to get them out of your hearts.

4. The sooner you begin the more pleasant will the work be. Repentance I can compare it to nothing so well as to Butter, we say Butter is Gold in the Morning, Silver at Noon, but Lead at Night; O so is Repentance, in the Morning of our days 'tis Gold for its rarity, Gold for its purity, Gold for its weight, Gold for its price; at Noon in the middle of our Age, 'tis Silver, 'tis of great value but not so pure as in the Morning, we contract more dross and filth to our Souls by that time; but at Night, O then Repentance is like lead to a man, upon his Death-bed 'tis an hard tedious unpleasant work. O do not put it off so long you loose the price and the benefit of it.

5. Take heed of staying too long least it prove too late. It is reported of *Thales* one of the Wise Men of *Greece*, that being urged by his Mother to Marry, he told her at first it was too soon; and afterward when she urged him again, he told her it was too late. O Brethren, hearken to this word; when we exhort you to part with
your

your own Iniquities, we are urging a match, an espousal between Christ and your Souls, Christ will consent if you will but part with this sin, O do not say, 'tis too soon, 'tis too soon, perhaps before you hear another Sermon Christ may say to some of you now 'tis too late. O make good use of the present seasons, that is all the time you can promise to your selves.

3. Whatever you do in this work of casting out your own Iniquity, examin it by the Scripture, else you may be deceived; the strength of a building consists in the rectitude and straitness of it, and therefore to every stone that is laid on, the Mason he lays his rule, his line, his plummet that it may be even. Brethren, what we do by Scripture rule, we may be sure is well done and will last to Eternity; when *Saul* would cast out his melancholy, the Devil he doth it by Musick, that was the advice of his Courtiers, and not of God's word. No let us follow the Scripture, what that bids us do and what means that bids us use to the casting out of this sin, let us follow that counsel and none else; there is peace to all that do walk according to that Rule.

4. Be

4. Be sure you go not forth in your own strength against this sin or any sin; O how many are foiled by Temptations, because they have not taken Christ along with them, 4. *Phil.* 13. and we may add this if Christ had not strengthened him *Paul* could have done nothing. O Brethren, be sure you forget not this, else all that you do will be in vain. 'Twas in the Name of the Lord that *David* went out to fight against *Goliath*, and it must be in the Name of Christ, and strength and power of Christ that we must go out against this sin, and then shall we assuredly return conquerors.

2. After we have got this sin out. Brethren, 'tis not enough to turn this sin out, but we must keep it out else 'twill return again, 12. *Mat.* 43, 44, 45. O prevent its return again, have a care of returning to it again, that will be very dangerous, and therefore I will at present give you the advice the Prophet gave to the King of *Israel* 1 *Kings* 20. 21, 22. so observe mark what you do, be not secure, sin will rally up again, and the Devil will give you another onset. Brethren, I might here as it were enter into a new field, and inlarge my self very much, but my intent is to put a pe-

riod to this discourse, and therefore I will only lay down two directions in this case, and so conclude.

1. Pray much against this sin, even after you have thrown it out ; prayer will fetch down strength from Heaven to resist. A praying Christian is a powerful Christian ; the Devil trembles at the Prayers of a true Saint, O then neglect not this duty.

2. Be watchfull against this sin ; what *Solomon* saith of a Vertuous Woman may be applyed to this case, 31. *Prov.* 18. when a man comes to see the happiness of being freed from his own Iniquity, O this makes him watchful and industrious that he come not into the slavery of sin again, the good Christian keeps his Watch-candle always burning. It was an excellent saying of *Luther*, *apperuit nobis in paradiso oculos Satan ; nunc omnis labor in eo nobis est, ut eos iterum claudamus & obturemus.* Christ he bids us watch, and he would feign find us waking when he comes, but the Devil he would feign find us sleeping when he comes ; security that brings sin to us again. O Brethren, after we have taken pains to cast out this sin, let us not be so careless and negligent as to suffer this sin to get possession

possession again. And this is the way the Text points out to us to keep this sin out to be watchfull against it, the word in the Text is **נִשְׁמַרְתִּי** I kept my self, it signifyeth, as I noted at the beginning of my entering upon this Text, the care and diligence of a Sentinel, that stands upon his Watch-tower to descry an enemy coming. O Brethren, are we Christians let us be always upon our guard, always upon our Watch-tower. Brethren, we can never be too carefull in this business, our Souls our everlasting condition depends upon this, as ever we hope to appear in the presence of God at the Day of Judgment, let this be the Rule of our whole lives here upon the Earth, To live uprightly before God, and to keep our selves from our own Iniquities.

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P O S T - S C R I P T.

BY reason of the Publishers distance from the Press, there are several Errata's have passed it, some of which are very material and quite spoil the sense, as these following.

E R R A T A.

IN the Publishers Preface, Page 3. line 13. after studied put in for this he lived. p. 5. l. 26. for by it r. God it. p. 6. l. 1. for or r. and.

In the Sermons p. 5. l. 25. for upright r. unright. p. 10. l. 2. for as r. at. p. 14. l. 7. instead of for r. so. p. 36. l. 25. after Christ put in your selves you that can part with Christ. p. 39. l. 10. for and r. that. p. 41. l. 15. for may r. had. p. 48. l. 25. before other add in. p. 60. l. 1. for dines r. deines. p. 73. l. 17. for weakest r. meekest. p. 76. l. 27. for and r. that. p. 81. l. 10. for servants r. servant. p. 107. l. 6. for when r. whence. p. 109. l. 17. for and r. that. p. 111. l. 22. after can be add while we are thus abroad to keep possession at home, to play its pranks in our own hearts. p. 117. l. 2. after will add so a faint sins but 'tis much against his will. p. 125. l. 24. for abroad r. abode. p. 141. l. 15. after wickedness add but. p. 143. l. 11. for will. r. would p. 215. l. 1. for in r. of.

These are the most considerable Mistakes, for literal faults and mispointings, which are too many the Reader is desired to amend them.

